

Statement of Intention of Candidacy - Nonpartisan

- This form must be completed by a candidate seeking nonpartisan office. Contact the receiving authority for filing deadlines.
- The S.C. Constitution prohibits a person who has been convicted of a felony from filing for public office for 15 years after the completion of the sentence, including probation and parole time, unless previously pardoned.

Name							
Office							
County or City		Election Date					
Address		City		Zip			
Email Address							
Telephone		Cell		Home		Work	
Voter Registration Number							
Guidelines for a Candidate's Name to appear on the ballot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A given name or a derivative may be used ▪ The name may not contain quotations, parentheses, or other distinguishing marks ▪ Nicknames are allowed if they are used in good faith for honest purposes and do not: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Imply professional or social status ▪ Include an office or military rank ▪ Exceed 15 letters 							
Name as you wish it to appear on ballot (please print)							

Candidate's Oath	
I affirm I meet, or will meet by the time of the general or special election, the qualifications for this office.	
Candidate's Signature	

To be Completed by Receiving Authority					
Date Received		Time Received		Filing Fee Amount Paid	
Received By			Receiving Authority		



**S.C. State Election Commission
Policy on Candidate Withdrawals
April 14, 2022**

The purpose of this policy is to set a uniform procedure for candidate withdrawals, to help ensure the integrity of the ballot production process, and to help ensure compliance with federal and state election deadlines.

- To withdraw, a candidate must submit a statement signed and dated by the candidate that specifies the office for which the candidate was running, the election in which the candidate was running, and must clearly state the candidate's intention to withdraw.
- The statement must be submitted to the appropriate authority charged by law with conducting the election.
 - Statements regarding elections for federal, statewide and multi-county offices, including all State Senate and State House of Representatives seats, must be submitted to the State Election Commission.
 - Statements regarding elections for countywide and less-than-countywide offices, excluding State Senate and State House of Representatives seats, must be submitted to the appropriate county board of voter registration and elections or municipal election commission.
- Candidate names will not be removed from ballots unless the proper election authority receives the statement in a timely manner.
 - The statement must be received by the proper election authority no later than 5:00 PM on the 48th day before the election.
 - This deadline also applies to deaths, disqualifications and decertifications. Candidate names will not be removed unless the proper election authority receives notification of the death, disqualification or decertification no later than 5:00 PM on the 48th day before the election.
- If a candidate submits a withdrawal statement to a political party, the State Election Commission and county boards of voter registration and elections will accept a copy of the statement from the political party.

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Nonpartisan Candidate Checklist

Candidate Name: _____ Date: _____
(Please Print Legibly)

- Candidate completed and submitted Statement of Intention of Candidacy form.
- Candidate received a copy of completed Statement of Intention of Candidacy form.
- Candidate received a copy of the Filing Receipt.
- Candidate was informed of and received a copy of Guidelines for Political & Campaign Signs.
- Candidate received a copy of Candidate Do's and Don'ts.
- Candidate was informed and understands that all candidates must file a Statement of Economic Interest (SEI) form with the State Ethics Commission, and that the SEI must be done electronically on the **State Ethics Commission website**.
- Candidate understands that he or she may also be required to make Campaign Disclosure reports. (Visit the State Ethics Commission website for more information.)
- Candidate received a copy of Statement of Economic Interest General Information.
- Candidate received a copy of Important Information for Nonpartisan Candidates.

Type of Candidate	Filing Deadline
Candidates who file with a state or local political party	Prior to the close of filing for the office
Petition candidates	Within 15 days of submitting the petition
Write-In candidates	Within 24 hours of filing an Initial Campaign Disclosure or before taking the oath of office, whichever event occurs earlier
All Other Candidates	Prior to taking the oath of office
Elected, Appointed and Employee filers	Upon assuming official duties or taking the oath of office, whichever occurs earlier. Annually thereafter by March 30.
New or Interim Appointed and Employee filers	Before assuming the duties of the position.

Candidate Signature: _____ Date: _____

*By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the **Nonpartisan Candidate Checklist** that contains the steps I must take to become an official candidate. Further, I fully understand that all candidates **MUST** file a Statement of Economic Interest form based upon the timeline provided in the above chart, and may be required to file Campaign Disclosure reports.*



STATE ETHICS COMMISSION CANDIDATE NEWSLETTER

2022

WHO IS A CANDIDATE?

A candidate is a person who seeks election, nomination for election, or seeks appointment to a local or statewide office. A person on whose behalf write-in votes are solicited for election to a local or statewide office is also considered a candidate.

DATES TO REMEMBER

April 10th – First Quarter Campaign Disclosure due.

July 10th – Second Quarter Campaign Disclosure due.

October 10th – Third Quarter Campaign Disclosure due.

January 10th – Fourth Quarter Campaign Disclosure due.

Pre-Election Campaign Disclosures must be filed by all candidates fifteen – twenty days before the election.

File your Statement of Economic Interests before you are sworn in if you are in a non-partisan race. File your Statement of Economic Interests immediately if you are in a partisan race.

REQUIREMENTS FOR CANDIDATES

As a candidate for public office in South Carolina, you are required to do the following:

As a candidate for office, you are subject to the Ethics Reform Act and are now under the jurisdiction of the State Ethics Commission. As you raise money for your campaign, please know that individuals can contribute up to \$1,000.00 for your race if you are running in a local election and \$3,500.00 if you are running in a statewide race.

You must open a campaign checking account if you are spending money on your race – even if you are only spending your own money. Failure to open a campaign checking account is a violation of state law. All campaign contributions (even your own) should go into your campaign checking account and all campaign expenditures should come out of your campaign checking.

Candidates are required to campaign disclosures – disclosing all campaign contributions and expenditures. An initial campaign disclosure is due when you raise or spend a total of \$500.00. For example, if you raise \$300.00 and spend \$200.00 you should immediately file an Initial Campaign Disclosure. You must file campaign disclosures every quarter as long as you maintain a balance in your campaign checking account. Even if you do not raise or spend money on your election, all candidates must file a Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure fifteen – twenty days before their election.

If you are running in a partisan race, you must immediately file a Statement of Economic Interests disclosing sources of income to your household. If you are running in a non-partisan race, you do not need to file a Statement of Economic Interests unless you win your race. If you are successful in your race, you must file a Statement of Economic Interests prior to taking the oath of office.



WHERE TO FILE

Your campaign disclosures and your Statement of Economic Interests must be filed electronically using the Commission's website at www.ethics.sc.gov. Once you get to the website, click on "Electronic Filing" at the top of the screen.

You will be directed to the Commission's filing portal where you will create a user account that will assist you with filing. If you have any questions along the way, please call us at 803-253-4192 or watch tutorials at <https://ethicsfiling.sc.gov/filing/videos>.

Please opt in to receive text message that will remind you of important filing deadlines.

WHEN THE RACE IS OVER

When your race is over, you must continue to file campaign disclosures as long as you have a balance in your campaign checking account. Once your campaign checking account balance reaches \$0.00, you can file a final campaign disclosure.

In order to bring your campaign checking account balance to \$0.00, you can donate your remaining campaign funds to a 501(c)(3), donate the remaining campaign funds to the state's general fund, return campaign funds to your contributors at a pro-rated rate, or by a combination of all three methods.

IF YOU DO NOT FILE...

Failing to file these required documents can be costly. For every filing that you fail to file, you are looking at a penalty of up to \$5,000.00. These penalties can really add up – if you fail to file campaign disclosures and a Statement of Economic Interests over the course of one year, you can be penalized up to \$25,000.00. Please be aware that these penalties must be paid from your personal funds – not campaign funds.

HELPFUL POINTERS

- 1) Do not use any government resources (office, equipment, time, etc.) in your run for office. You shouldn't be working on your campaign from a government issued computer or while working for the government.
- 2) Do not use your campaign money to pay for any personal expenses. You cannot pay for your meals, clothes, or gasoline using your campaign account. You are allowed to keep a mileage chart for reimbursement.
- 3) Do not withdraw more than \$100.00 in cash from your campaign account. Campaign expenses should be paid using a check or credit/debit card.

FURTHER ASSISTANCE

We offer candidate training on a regular basis – and you can attend from the comfort of your couch! If you do not receive an email from us inviting you to one of our virtual trainings, please contact us at candidateinformation@ethics.sc.gov. If you have any questions about the Ethics Act, please give us a call.

Important Information for Nonpartisan Candidates

State Ethics Filings

- You must file a Statement of Economic Interest and Campaign Disclosure with the State Ethics Commission through the agency's website by certain deadlines. You may be fined by the Ethics Commission for failure to file properly. Visit the State Ethics Commission's website for more information: <https://ethics.sc.gov/>

Absentee Voting

- You and members of your paid campaign staff, including volunteers reimbursed for time expended on campaign activity, may not:
 - Request an absentee ballot application for any person other than immediate family.
 - Individuals are limited to five application requests in addition to their own. *
- Return another voter's absentee ballot other than immediate family. If returning a family member's ballot, you and the family member must complete the Authorization to Return Absentee Ballot Form.
 - Individuals can return five absentee ballots in addition to their own. *
- It is illegal to procure votes by threat, intimidation, force, deception, mistreatment, abuse, or fraud; or by the payment, delivery, or promise of money or other article of value. *

* Violations of these provisions are felonies punishable by up to a \$5,000 fine and up to 5 years in prison.

At the Polling Place

Campaign Material

- May not be displayed or distributed within 500 feet of entrance to the polling place.
- Campaign material is any written or visual material that has the intention or effect of supporting or opposing any candidate or question in the current election.

Campaigning

- Inside the polling place: No campaigning allowed.
- Outside the polling place:
 - You and your campaign staff may greet voters if the activity is not intimidating or disruptive.
 - You can wear a badge no larger than 4 ¼" x 4 ¼" containing your name and office. You may not wear the badge inside the polling place.

Poll Watchers

- You can appoint one watcher at a time to observe the process in a polling place.
- Requirements:
 - Must be a qualified voter in the county.
 - Must present letter to managers from you certifying them to watch in the precinct.
 - Must wear badge no larger than 4 ¼" x 4 ¼" stating the person is a watcher for you.
- Must direct any voter challenges or questions to the poll managers and not to voters.
- May not interfere with the orderly conduct of the election or attempt to influence voters.



Protests & Appeals

Candidates who wish to protest an election must do so by filing the protest with the appropriate authority prior to applicable deadlines. Protests must be filed in writing, with a copy for each candidate in the race, and must contain each ground concisely stated separately (7-17-30, 7-17-260).

Protests that are not filed with appropriate authorities by applicable deadlines may not be valid. Refer to the S.C. Code of Laws for detailed information on protests and appeals.

Type of Office	Deadline to File Protest	Where to File	Who Hears Protest	When Protests are Heard	S.C. Code of Laws
Municipal	Within 48 hours of closing of polls	Chairperson, Municipal Election Commission (MEC). If municipality has transferred duty to county, then the County Board of Voter Registration and Elections (County Board).	MEC. If municipality has transferred duty to county, then County Board.	Within 48 hours of filing of protest	5-15-130
Countywide and Less Than Countywide	Noon, Wednesday following certification	Chairperson, County Board or County Sheriff	County Board	Monday following the deadline to file protest	7-17-30, 7-17-50
Federal, Statewide, Multi-County, State Senate and State House	Noon, 5 days following certification	Chairperson, State Election Commission (SEC) or Chief, State Law Enforcement Division	SEC	Not earlier than the 5th or later than the 25th day following receipt of protest	7-17-260, 7-17-270

Source: <https://www.scvotes.gov/protests-appeals>



Candidate Dos and Donts

A nickname may be used on the ballot if it does not exceed 15 letters, does not imply professional or social status, is a derivative of your given name properly acquired or bears no relation to your given name but it is used in good faith.

It is permissible for a candidate to be stationed outside the polling place but within the above stated 500 foot area, greet voters and solicit votes, provided there are no complaints by voters to the managers regarding this activity, or as long as in the managers judgment there is no disruption of the orderly election process. Candidates may not display or distribute campaign literature within this 500 foot area. A candidate may wear a badge no larger than 4 ¼"x 4 ¼" within 500 feet of the entrance to the polling place. This label may contain the candidate's name and office sought.

The candidate may enter the polling place, but the candidate's badge must be removed before entering (*Section 7-25-180 (b)*). A candidate may not actively campaign inside the polling place. Candidates and poll watchers should be permitted to look at the voter registration list in the polling place, provided that they do not interfere with the orderly conduct of the election and no one is waiting in line to vote.

A candidate or member of a candidate's paid campaign staff, including volunteers reimbursed for time expended on campaign activity, may not request an absentee ballot application for any person unless that person is a member of their immediate family.

It is unlawful for any person to procure votes in an election by threat, intimidation, coercion, mistreatment, or abuse; or by the payment, delivery, or promise of money or other article of value.

Placing posters on telephone/utility poles may be considered destruction of private property. Also, the staples and nails left in the poles are very dangerous for the workers who must climb these poles during an emergency. Utility companies ask candidates to not place signs on these poles.

Source: <https://www.scvotes.gov/candidate-dos-and-donts>

