

CANDIDATE GUIDE

November 3, 2026
General Election



General Election – November 3, 2026

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Declaration of Candidacy and Nomination Period EC §8020, 8040, 8041, 8061, 8100, 8104, 8105, 8106, 13107		
7/13/2026 - 8/7/2026 E-113 to E-88	Candidates / ROV	Between these dates, a candidate must file a Declaration of Candidacy and Nomination Papers with the ROV. All candidates must pay their filing fee at the time they obtain their Nomination Papers.
Candidate Statement of Qualifications EC §13307, 13311		
7/13/2026 - 8/7/2026 E-113 to E-88	Candidates / ROV	Between these dates, candidates may prepare a Statement of Qualifications, not to exceed 200 words, to be included in the Voter's Information Guide. The statement will remain confidential until deadline for filing has passed. The statement may not be changed, but may be withdrawn up to 5:00 p.m. on August 10, 2026 if the contest closes on August 7, 2026 or August 11, 2026 if the contests closes on August 8, 2026 after the extension period. A written request to withdraw a Candidate Statement must be sent to the ROV Office prior to the deadline listed above.

24-Hour Contribution Reports GC 82036		
8/5/2026 - 11/3/2026 E-90 to E-Day	Candidates	During the 90 days immediately preceding an election and including Election Day, the following contributions that total in the aggregate of \$1,000 or more must be reported within 24 hours to the Registrar of Voters. Form 496: File if independent expenditures of \$1,000 or more are made. Form 497: File if a contribution of \$1,000 or more in the aggregate is received from a single source. Form 497: File if a contribution of \$1,000 or more in the aggregate is made to a candidate or measure being voted upon November 3, 2026, or to a political party committee. Non-Monetary Contribution: The recipient of a non-monetary contribution of \$1,000 or more must file a Form 497 report within 48 hours from the time the contribution is received. File by personal delivery, email, guaranteed overnight service, fax or online if available.
Declaration of Candidacy and Nomination Period EC §8020, 8040, 8061, 8100, 8104, 8105, 8106, 13107		
8/7/2026 E-88	Candidates / Registrar of Voters	Deadline for a candidate to file a Declaration of Candidacy and Nomination papers with the ROV.
No Candidate May Withdraw After Filing Deadline EC §8800, 8020.5		
8/7/2026 E-88	Candidates	No candidate whose declaration of candidacy has been filed for any primary election may withdraw as a candidate at that primary election after filing deadline.
Extension of Nomination Period EC §8022, 8024, 8204		
8/8/2026 - 8/12/2026 E-87 to E-83	Candidates / ROV	Extension period for anyone other than the incumbent to file a Declaration of Candidacy and Nomination Petition if the incumbent did not file by August 7, 2026. This provision does not apply if there is no incumbent eligible to be elected.

Public Exam of Candidate Statements EC §13313		
3/7/2026 - 3/16/2026 E-87 to E-78	Candidates / ROV	During this 10-day period, the ROV will make candidates' statements available for public examination.
Randomized Alphabet Drawing EC §13112		
8/13/2026 E-82	Secretary of State / Registrar of Voters	The Secretary of State shall conduct the randomized alphabet drawing to determine the order in which the candidates will appear on the primary election ballot. On the same day, the County ROV shall conduct a randomized alphabet drawing for State Senate and Assembly offices.
Notice of Whether Election Will be Held EC §10515		
8/13/2026 E-82	ROV	If there are insufficient nominees for the offices to be filled, and a petition requesting the election be held has not been presented to the officer conducting the election, then the election shall not be held. The ROV shall request the Board of Supervisors to appoint the qualified candidate(s) to such office. If there are no candidates, the supervising authority shall appoint a qualified person to each office. Persons appointed shall qualify and serve as if elected.
Military or Overseas Vote-by-Mail Ballot Applications EC §300(b), 3102, 3105		
9/4/2026 E-60	ROV	First day the ROV may process applications for military or overseas voter ballots. Any applications received by the ROV prior to this day shall be kept and processed on or after this date. If the applicant is not a resident of the county to which he or she has applied, the ROV receiving the application shall forward it immediately to the proper county.
Nomination Period for Write-In Candidates EC §8600, 8601 et seq.		
9/7/2026 - 10/20/2026 E-57 to E-14	Candidates / ROV	Nomination papers for write-in candidacy will be available beginning September 7, 2026 and must be filed with the Registrar of Voters no later than 5:00 p.m. on October 20, 2026.

Filing Period for First Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure Statement GC §84200.5, 84200.8(a)		
9/24/2026 E-40	Candidates / Committees / ROV	Last day to file campaign statements for candidates and committees covering the period between July 1 to September 19, 2026. Statements must be sent by personal delivery or first class mail.
Voter Information Guide Mailing EC §9094, 13303, 13304		
9/24/2026 - 10/13/2026 E-40 to E-21	Secretary of State / ROV	Between these dates, the ROV shall mail a Voter Information Guide and Sample Ballot with a polling place notice to each registered voter. Between these dates the Secretary of State shall mail state Voter Information Guides to each registered voter.
Vote-by-Mail Ballot Distribution EC §3001, 3003		
10/5/2026 E-29	ROV	On this day, the ROV will begin to mail vote-by-mail ballots to all active registered voters.
Filing Period for Second Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure Statement GC §84200.5, 84200.8		
10/22/2026 E-12	Candidates / Committees / ROV	Last day to file campaign statements for candidates and committees covering the period of September 20 - October 17, 2026. Statement must be sent by personal delivery or guaranteed overnight delivery.
11-Day Vote Centers Open EC §4005 (a)(4)(A)		
10/24/2026 - 11/3/2026 E-10 to E-Day	ROV	Beginning 10 days before Election Day, 1 Vote Center for every 50,000 registered voters as of the 88th day shall be open for a minimum of 8 hours and from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.
4-Day Vote Centers Open EC §4005 (a)(3)(A)		
10/31/2026 - 11/3/2026 E-3 to E-Day	ROV	Beginning 3 days before Election Day, 1 Vote Center for every 10,000 registered voters as of the 88th day shall be open for a minimum of 8 hours and from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.

Election Day		
11/3/2026 E-Day	ROV	Vote Centers open at 7:00 a.m. and will close at 8:00 p.m. Vote-by-Mail ballots may be turned in before the polls close at any Vote Center or any drop box within California, or postmarked on or before this date by the U.S. Postal Service.
Official Canvass EC §15301, 15372		
11/5/2026 - 12/3/2026 E+2 to E+30	ROV	The official canvass of precinct returns is to be completed during this time. Canvass shall be continued daily, Saturday, Sundays and holidays excepted, for not less than six hours each day until completed.
Vote-by-Mail Ballots Returned Via Post Office Deadline EC §3020		
11/10/2026 E+7	ROV	Vote-by-Mail ballots that are postmarked on or before Election Day or are date stamped by a bona fide private mail delivery company on or before Election Day, and received by the ROV no later than 7 days after Election Day shall be considered received on time. If the ballot has no postmark, a postmark with no date or an illegible postmark, the vote-by-mail ballot identification envelope must be signed and dated by the voter pursuant to Elections Code §3011 on or before Election Day in order to be considered received on time.

Recount May be Requested EC §15620-16542		
5 Days After Canvass	ROV	Within five (5) days after the completion of the official canvass, any voter may request a recount by filing a written request with the ROV, specifying which candidate(s) and/or measures are to be recounted. The petitioning voter shall, before commencement of each day's recount, deposit such sum as the ROV deems required to cover costs of the recount. "Completion of the canvass" shall be the time when the ROV signs the certified Statement of Vote.
Statement of Vote to Secretary of State EC §15375		
12/3/2026 E+30	ROV	No later than this date, the ROV shall send one copy of the Statement of Vote to the Secretary of State.
Certificates of Election or Nomination to be Prepared EC §8145, 8146, 8147		
12/4/2026 E+31	ROV	The county ROV will prepare certificates of election for each candidate elected for nonpartisan offices voted for wholly within one county. The Secretary of State will prepare certificates of nomination for Congressional and Legislative candidates.

CONTESTS

City of Brawley – Council	4 Year Term
City of Calexico – Council	4 Year Term
City of Calipatria – Council	4 Year Term
City of El Centro – Council	4 Year Term
City of Holtville – Council	4 Year Term
City of Imperial – Council	4 Year Term
City of Imperial – City Clerk	4 Year Term
City of Westmorland – Council	4 Year Term
Imperial County Board of Education, Area I – Trustee	4 Year Term
Imperial County Board of Education, Area II – Trustee	4 Year Term
Brawley Elementary School District – Trustee	4 Year Term
Brawley Union High School District – Trustee	4 Year Term
Calexico Unified School District – Trustee	4 Year Term
Calipatria Unified School District – Trustee	4 Year Term
Central Union High School District – Trustee	4 Year Term
Coachella Valley Unified School District, Area 1 – Trustee	4 Year Term
Coachella Valley Unified School District, Area 2 – Trustee	4 Year Term
Desert Community College, Area 1 – Trustee	4 Year Term
El Centro Elementary School District – Trustee	4 Year Term
Heber Elementary School District – Trustee	4 Year Term
Holtville Unified School District – Trustee	4 Year Term
Imperial Community College District, Area 2 - Trustee	4 Year Term
Imperial Community College District, Area 5 - Trustee	4 Year Term
Imperial Community College District, Area 7 - Trustee	4 Year Term
Imperial Unified School District – Trustee	4 Year Term
Magnolia Union Elementary School District – Trustee	4 Year Term
McCabe Union Elementary School District – Trustee	4 Year Term
Meadows Union Elementary School District – Trustee	4 Year Term
Mulberry Elementary School District – Trustee	4 Year Term

San Pasqual Valley Unified School District – Trustee	4 Year Term
Seeley Union Elementary School District – Trustee	4 Year Term
Westmorland Union Elementary School District – Trustee	4 Year Term
Bombay Beach Community Service District – Director	4 Year Term
Bombay Beach Community Service District – Director	2 Year Term
Coachella Valley Water District, Division 5 – Director	4 Year Term
Heber Public Utility District – Director	4 Year Term
Imperial Valley Healthcare District, District 1 – Director	4 Year Term
Imperial Valley Healthcare District, District 2 – Director	4 Year Term
Imperial Valley Healthcare District, District 3 – Director	4 Year Term
Imperial Valley Healthcare District, District 7 – Director	2 Year Term
Salton Community Services District - Director	4 Year Term
Seeley County Water District – Director	4 Year Term
Winterhaven Water District – Director	4 Year Term

GENERAL INFORMATION ON CANDIDATE FILING PROCEDURES

All candidates must be registered voters at the time nomination documents are issued and otherwise qualified to vote for the office for which they are filing. (EC §201)

State law requires that all nomination documents contain the candidate's name and the elective office title to which they are seeking nomination or election; and be signed by the elections official at the time of issuance. Verbal and written instructions regarding procedures to be followed in completing the nomination process are given to candidates or authorized agents when the forms are issued.

Only official documents issued by the Registrar of Voters' Office may be used. The forms are available online at www.elections.imperialcounty.org or at the Imperial County Registrar of Voters' Office, 940 West Main Street, Suite 206, El Centro between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Filing forms for city contests are available at the respective City Hall.

NOMINATION FILING PERIOD

Nomination Period for ALL Candidates	July 13 - August 7, 2026 (E-113 to E-88)
Nomination Extension Period (If eligible incumbent does not file)	August 8 – 12, 2026 (E-87 to E-83)
Write-In Nomination Documents	September 7 – October 20, 2026 (E-57 to E-14)

EXTENSION OF NOMINATION PERIOD

If an incumbent for any office fails to file nomination documents by 5:00 p.m. on August 7, 2026, the nomination period is extended for five (5) days to August 12, 2026. During this period, any qualified person, **other than the incumbent**, may file nomination documents for the office.

NOTE: The extension does not apply where there is no incumbent eligible to be elected.

CANDIDATE WITHDRAWAL

Withdrawal of candidacy is permitted up to and including the deadline date to file a Declaration of Candidacy for that office. The deadline date to file a Declaration of Candidacy is 5:00 p.m. on August 7, 2026.

EC §10224, 10603

NAME TO APPEAR ON THE BALLOT

The **ballot name** may be designated as the follows:

- First, middle and last names
- Initials only and last name
- A nickname may be included but must be in parentheses () or quotation marks “ ”
- A short version of the first name, such as “Bill” for William or “Kathy” for Kathleen

No titles or degrees are allowed in the ballot name.

EC §13106

Within one year of any election, a change in legal name shall not appear on the ballot unless the change is made by marriage or by decree of court.

EC §13104

On August 13, 2026, the Secretary of State and the Registrar of Voters shall hold a public drawing to determine the order of Candidate names on the ballot by randomly drawing each letter of the alphabet.

BALLOT DESIGNATION PROVISIONS

The **ballot designation** describes the current profession, vocation, occupation or incumbency status of the candidate that will appear on the ballot under the candidate’s name.

Ballot designations:

- Can be no more than three words.
- Must appear on the Declaration of Candidacy
- Becomes public record once the information is filed on the Declaration of Candidacy; ballot designations **cannot be changed after the final date to file nomination documents**.

The listing of a designation on the ballot is **OPTIONAL**. Only one of the following categories is allowed:

- 1) **Elective Office Title:** Words describing an elective office title may be used if the candidate holds the office at the time nomination documents are filed and the office was filled by a vote of the people.
Example A: Governing Board Member
Example B: Board member, XYZ School District
- 2) **Incumbent:** The word “Incumbent” may be used if the candidate is seeking re-election to the same office and was elected to that office by a vote of the people or was appointed as a nominated candidate in-lieu of an election.
- 3) **Appointed Incumbent:** An appointed incumbent may not use the word “Incumbent” as their designation. The words “Appointed Incumbent” must be used if the candidate was appointed to the office (other than a judicial office) and is

seeking election to that office. The word “Appointed” may also be used with the office title.

Example A: Appointed Incumbent

Example B: Appointed Board Member, XYZ School District

Exception: Candidates appointed to office in-lieu of an election do not have to use the word “appointed”.

- 4) **Principal Occupation:** No more than three words to describe either the current principal profession, vocation, or occupation of the candidate or the principal professions, vocations, or occupations of the candidate during the calendar year immediately preceding the filing of nomination documents. Geographical names are considered one word.

Example A: High School Teacher

Example B: Attorney/Educator/Rancher

Example C: CEO/Councilmember

- 5) **Community Volunteer:** A Community Volunteer shall constitute a valid principal vocation or occupation subject to the following conditions:

- a) A candidate’s community volunteer activities constitute their principal profession, vocation or occupation.
- b) A candidate may not use the designation of “community volunteer” in combination with any other principal profession, vocation or occupation.
- c) A candidate is not engaged concurrently in another principal profession, vocation or occupation.

- 6) **No Occupation Desired:** If no ballot designation is required, write the word “NONE” and place your initials in the space provided for ballot designation on the Declaration of Candidacy form.

FORMAT OF BALLOT DESIGNATION

Ballot designations selected which exceed space allotted on the ballot (approximately 60 characters) are printed in a smaller typeface pursuant to §13107(i) of the California Elections Code.

BALLOT DESIGNATION WORKSHEET

A ballot designation worksheet that supports the use of that ballot designation is required to be filed with the Registrar of Voters at the same time as the Declaration of Candidacy. If a candidate fails to file a ballot designation worksheet, no designation will appear on the ballot. EC §13107.3

REJECTION OF BALLOT DESIGNATION

If the designation is in violation of any of the restrictions set forth in the California Elections Code, the candidate will be notified by certified mail with a return receipt addressed to the mailing address appearing on the candidate's ballot designation worksheet. If an alternative designation is not provided within the time allowed, no designation will appear on the ballot.

EC §13107(f)

UNACCEPTABLE DESIGNATIONS

Pursuant to Elections Code §13107(e), the elections official shall not accept a ballot designation if:

- a) It would mislead the voter.
- b) It would suggest an evaluation of a candidate, such as outstanding, leading, expert, virtuous, or eminent.
- c) It abbreviates the word "retired" or places it following any word(s) that it modifies.
- d) It includes a word or prefix, such as "former" or "ex-", which means a prior status. The only exception is the use of the word "retired".
- e) It includes the name of any political party, whether or not it has qualified for the ballot.
- f) It uses a word(s) referring to a racial, religious or ethnic group.
- g) It refers to any activity that is prohibited by law.

Guideline to acceptable ballot designation (basic test): Is it true?

- 1) Is it accurate?
- 2) Does it mislead?
- 3) Is it generic? (This means "IBM" is unacceptable; "Computer Company" is acceptable)
- 4) Is it neutral? (This means not for or against)
- 5) Is it how this person makes a living?

Candidates may review their own ballot designation, as well as that of other candidates, in the Registrar of Voters' Office during working hours, Monday through Friday, from August 8, 2026 through 5:00 p.m. on August 17, 2026. If the nomination period is extended, the period is from March 12, 2026 through 5:00 p.m. on March 22, 2026.

If you have any questions regarding nomination procedures, please contact Josie Morales at the Registrar of Voters' Office at (442) 265-1072 or via email at josiemorales@co.imperial.ca.us.

CANDIDATE NOMINATION PROCESS & FORMS

AUTHORIZATION TO PICK UP AND/OR FILE CANDIDATE NOMINATION DOCUMENTS

Candidates who will have their Candidate Nomination Documents picked up and/or filed via an agent must complete and return the **Authorization for Candidate's Representative** form before any documents may be filed on behalf of the candidate. All forms are available at the Elections Office or via our website at www.elections.imperialcounty.org.

Following are the four steps to the candidate nomination process:

STEP 1: CANDIDATE APPLICATION

Candidate, or authorized agents, are required to fill out a Candidate Application form.

The Candidate Application is available online at www.elections.imperialcounty.org. Information on the form is used in preparing nomination documents. **It is important that all information is accurate and legible.** The information printed on this form may be distributed to the news media, provided to the public and posted on our website.

STEP 2: BALLOT DESIGNATION WORKSHEET

If a candidate submits a ballot designation, the "Ballot Designation Worksheet" shall be filed with the elections official at the time of the candidate files their Declaration of Candidacy Form. If the candidate fails to file a Ballot Designation Worksheet, no designation shall appear under the candidate's name on the ballot.

STEP 3: PUBLIC INFORMATION WORKSHEET

Interested parties, including, but not limited to the public, vendors and media outlets may request and obtain lists of candidates. In addition, candidate contact information may be posted on the Registrar of Voters' website. If you wish for your information not to be made public, please indicate your intentions to the elections official. Confidential Voter Opt-Out options will be discussed later within this document.

STEP 4: FILING NOMINATION DOCUMENTS

Listed below are mandatory and optional documents to be filed for candidacy. It is the obligation of the candidate to ensure that filing requirements and deadlines are met. All candidates are urged to file documents as early as possible to avoid a last-minute rush. **Candidates must schedule an appointment with an election official to file nomination documents.** To schedule an appointment or if you have any questions regarding the candidate nomination process, contact Josie Morales at the Registrar of Voters' Office at (442) 265-1072 or contact via email at josiemorales@co.imperial.ca.us.

CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

California Elections Code provides that Candidate Statements must be filed no later than 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the Nomination Period. A Candidate Statement is optional and may include the candidate's age and occupation. Following are specific guidelines related to Candidate Statements:

- 1) Statement may not include references to other candidates.
- 2) No changes are allowed to a statement after the nomination period deadline, unless there are issues with Election Code compliance or Court ordered changes.
- 3) No reference to candidate's political party affiliation or any partisan political membership or activity is permitted.
- 4) If the legislative district to be voted on is shared by more than one county, the candidate must file a statement with each county.
- 5) If candidate's name does not appear on the official ballot, the candidate is not entitled to a candidate statement in the Official Sample Ballot Booklet EC §302

COST OF CANDIDATE STATEMENT

Candidate statements should be submitted electronically to the elections official. The cost for filing an electronic candidate statement is \$300. Paper hard copy of candidate statements will also be accepted for a charge of \$350. Payment shall be made via cash, check or money order. Credit cards are not accepted in the Registrar of Voters' Office.

FORMAT AND STYLE INFORMATION

- 1) Statements should be submitted electronically using the online form available at www.elections.imperialcounty.org. Forms should be submitted as follows: **1)** email completed form to Josie Morales at josiemorales@co.imperial.ca.us and **2)** a signed copy submitted at the time of filing the Declaration of Candidacy. An original signature must be included with the hard copy submission.
- 2) Statements will be printed in uniform type, style and spacing. Text submitted indented or centered will be typeset in block paragraph form. Entire statements in all capital letters, bold and italics are not acceptable. Indentations cannot be accommodated. Words to be printed in boldface type, underscored, and/or CAPITALIZED are to be clearly indicated.
- 3) Any statement received formatted to include paragraph breaks and/or individual listings of accomplishments, endorsement, etc. will be reformatted into block paragraph form.
- 4) Candidates should verify the length of the statement to ensure they do not exceed the maximum number of words allowed.

5) All statements will be translated into Spanish for the convenience of our voters.

IMPORTANT: It is the candidate's responsibility to proofread the Statement of Qualifications before filing. Statements are printed exactly as submitted. The Elections Official will not edit or correct spelling, punctuation, grammar, or syntax. Formatting changes may be made only as necessary to comply with Elections Code requirements or printing specifications.

EXAMPLE OF A CORRECT CANDIDATE STATEMENT FORMAT:

STATEMENT OF CANDIDATE FOR OFFICE TITLE, DIVISION

NAME OF CANDIDATE (as it will appear on the ballot)

OCCUPATION: Profession, Vocation or Occupation

QUALIFICATIONS: This is an example of an acceptable format to be used in a candidate's statement of qualifications. The guidelines for the content of the statement are in a separate section of this information booklet. It is acceptable for some words or phrases to be **bold**, underscored, or CAPITALIZED. Hyphens/dashes are allowed. The candidate statement is printed in "block" paragraph, justified, single spaced format.

INDIGENT CANDIDATES

If a candidate alleges to be indigent and is unable to pay the advance fee for submitting a candidate statement, the candidate shall submit an Affidavit of Financial Worth to the Registrar of Voters to be used in determining the candidate's indigence eligibility. The affidavit shall be submitted by the candidate with their candidate statement by the specified deadline. The candidate shall certify under penalty of perjury the truth and correctness of the content of the affidavit. A determination shall be made whether or not the candidate is indigent and an elections official will notify the candidate of its findings. If a determination is made the candidate is indigent, the Registrar of Voters shall print the statement without payment of the advance fee. If a determination is made that the candidate is not indigent, the candidate shall withdraw the statement or pay the requisite fee within three days of notification, excluding Saturdays, Sundays and holidays.

PUBLIC EXAMINATION PERIOD

Candidate statements are confidential until after the close of the nomination period. Once the filing period closes, the statements are open to public examination for a ten (10) calendar day period. If the nomination period is extended for a particular office, the statements are open to public examination for another ten (10) calendar day period. A

fee may be charged to any person wishing to obtain a copy of the material. During both periods, any person may file a writ of mandate or an injunction to require any or all of the content/data to be amended or deleted. EC §13311

Public examination of candidate statements for city jurisdiction offices is provided by the respective city officials. Interested parties should contact the City Clerk for further information.

**STATEMENTS MUST BE FILED NO LATER THAN 5:00 P.M. ON THE
LAST DAY OF THE NOMINATION PERIOD. NO EXCEPTIONS.**

REQUEST FOR REFUND OF CANDIDATE STATEMENT FEE

A candidate may request a refund of a candidate statement fee in the case that upon close of the nomination period, there are equal to or fewer candidates than seats open and the contest does not appear on the ballot. A request for refund must be submitted, in writing, to the Registrar of Voters no later than 5:00 p.m. on August 10, 2026, or in the case of an extended nomination period, 5:00 p.m. on August 13, 2026.

CANDIDATE STATEMENT LIMITATIONS

The California Elections Code and case law prohibit candidates from referring to any other candidate or to another candidate's qualifications, character or activities within their candidate statement. If the Registrar of Voters discovers improper content in a candidate statement, an elections official will notify the candidate and give the individual an opportunity to correct the improper language in the candidate statement. If the candidate refuses to correct the improper language, the Registrar of Voters as well as any other voter, may bring legal action against the candidate to correct the statement. The prevailing party may also be entitled to obtain attorney's fees for bringing the action.

The Registrar of Voters will not accept language in a candidate statement that in any way makes reference to other candidates or to another candidate's qualifications, character, or activities pursuant to California Elections Code §13308. The Registrar of Voters will remove the improper language from the statement and not allow it to be printed. The candidate will be notified of the improper language and its removal from the statement.

All prospective candidates are advised to refer to the California Elections Code §13307, 13308, 13311, 13313, and 13314, as well as the California Court of Appeals ruling in *Dean v. Superior Court*, (1998 4th Dist.) 62 Cal. App. 4th 638. However, this list is not exhaustive and candidates are solely responsible for preparation and submittal of candidate's statements that are in conformance with the law. A copy of the above-described Elections Code sections is available from the Registrar of Voters' Office at no cost.

WORD COUNTING GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are used by the Registrar of Voters' Office for counting words on candidate statements, ballot measure text, arguments, rebuttals and other ballot enclosures. The guidelines do not apply to ballot designations for candidates. If the text exceeds the specified 200 or 400-word limit, the author will be asked to delete words or change text until the statement conforms to requirements.

- 1) **PUNCTUATION MARKS** are not counted. Symbols such as "&" (and), and "#" (number/pound) are not considered punctuation and each symbol is counted as one (1) word.

- 2) **THE WORDS** "I", "a", "the", "and," are counted as individual words.

- 3) **PROPER NOUNS**, such as geographical names, and names of persons or things, are counted as one (1) word.

EXAMPLES: "Gus Enwright" = 1 word
"County of Imperial" = 1 word

- 4) **ABBREVIATIONS** such as acronyms or abbreviations for a word, phrase, or expression are counted as one (1) word

EXAMPLES: IVC, PTA, USMC, ICSO

- 5) **HYPHENATED WORDS** that appear in any generally available standard reference dictionary published in the U.S. at any time within the last 10 calendar years immediately preceding the election are counted as one (1) word.

EXAMPLE: Attorney-at-law

- 6) **DATES** are counted as one (1) word.

EXAMPLES: October 30, 1967 30 October, 1967 10/30 10/30/1967

- 7) **NUMERIC COMBINATIONS** are counted as one (1) word.

EXAMPLE: 1967 15 ½ 1970-75 5% #16

- 8) **MONETARY AMOUNTS** consisting of a combination of digits are counted as one (1) word.

EXAMPLE: \$1,000

MONETARY AMOUNTS consisting of a combination of words and digits are counted as two (2) words

EXAMPLE: \$4 million

- 9) **TELEPHONE/FAX NUMBERS** are counted as one (1) word.

EXAMPLES: 1-800-555-1234 (760) 555-1234

- 10) **INTERNET WEBSITES/E-MAIL ADDRESSES** are counted as one (1) word.

EXAMPLES: www.imperialcounty.org elections@co.imperial.ca.us

WRITE-IN CANDIDATES

A person who has not followed the usual procedures for placing their name on the ballot for the election may still be elected to office as a write-in candidate.

There is no party affiliation requirement for signers of write-in nomination petitions in the General Election. The candidate does not have to be registered with any qualified political party. However, they must be registered to vote in California and within the district whose office is sought.

NOMINATION PAPERS

Candidate must file the requisite number of signatures on the nomination papers, if any, required pursuant to EC §8062, 10220, and 10510, or, in the case of a special district not subject to the Uniform District Election Law (UDEL), the number of signatures required by the principal act of the district.

Write-in candidacy forms may be filed with the Registrar of Voter from September 7 through 5:00 p.m. on October 20, 2026. E-14

FILING DEADLINE FOR WRITE-IN CANDIDATES

Nomination Period for Write-In Candidates	September 7 – October 20, 2026 (E-57 to E-14)
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All candidates are urged to file the following documents as early as possible:

Statement of Write-In Candidate

Refer to General Information on Filing Procedures for Candidates in this handbook.

Candidate Campaign Statement Forms

If you have any questions regarding the completion of this form, contact the Registrar of Voters' Office at (442) 265-1060.

Election Results for Write-In Candidates

Write-in election results are not determined until the canvass is completed. California election law allows a prescribed number of days for the conduct of the official canvass. During the official canvass, write-in ballots must be individually reviewed to determine if the write-in vote is for a qualified or unqualified write-in candidate and whether a voter has over voted. All aspects of the canvass shall be open to the public. Write-in votes are counted and certified in an election only if qualified candidates have filed the required nomination documents with the elections official.

OFFICES OMITTED FROM BALLOT

Prospective write-in candidates should note that write-in candidacy is possible only if the office appears on the ballot. For judicial, school and UDEL contests, if the number of persons qualifying for the ballot does not exceed the number of offices to be filed, the election is cancelled and eligible candidates are appointed in-lieu of the election. California law however, provides that for such offices a petition indicating that a write-in campaign will be conducted must have been filed with the elections official to require the office(s) be placed on the ballot by means of a petition drive. EC §8203 and 10515; Ed. Code §5226

NAME DOES NOT APPEAR ON BALLOT

If candidate's name does not appear on the official ballot, the candidate is not entitled to a candidate statement in the Official Sample Ballot Booklet. EC §302

WRITE-IN CANDIDATES TO BE ELECTED

- 1) Depending on the contest, the person who receives a plurality of the votes cast is elected to that office. This includes write-in candidates. EC §15452
- 2) In order for a candidate, including a write-in candidate, to win election to a judicial or county office, the candidate must receive a majority of the ballots cast for candidates for that election. EC §8140, 8141 and 15450
- 3) A write-in candidate for a school district governing board member or special district board of director member contest must receive more votes than any other candidate running for that office. When more than one office is to be filled, those candidates, including qualified write-in candidates, receive the highest number of votes for however many seats are to be filled are elected.
- 4) Voters may write in any name they wish for any office regardless of whether the candidate is qualified or not. However, votes will only be tabulated for officially qualified write-in candidates.

FINANCIAL REPORTING

Campaign statement filing requirements for candidates and controlled committees participating in the November 3, 2026 General Election are as follows:

WITHIN 24 HOURS between August 5, 2026 (E-90) to November 3, 2026 (E-Day)	<u>LATE CONTRIBUTION and/or LATE INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURE REPORTS</u> Each candidate or committee that makes or receives a late contribution (including a loan) that total in the aggregate of \$1,000 or more <u>or</u> makes an independent expenditure of \$1,000 or more thru Election Day, June 2, 2026, <u>must file a Contribution Report – Form 497 and/or Independent Expenditure Report – Form 496 within 24 hours.</u> The recipient of a non-monetary or in-kind contribution of \$1,000 or more must file a Form 497 report within 48 hours from the time the contribution is received. GC §84203, 84204
September 24, 2026 (E-40)	<u>FIRST CAMPAIGN STATEMENT</u> Candidates who have a controlled committee and a committee primarily formed to support or oppose candidates or measures in this election should file a <u>Form 460.</u> Candidates who do not raise over \$2,000 should file a <u>Form 470.</u> All original statements must be received by personal delivery or first class mail. GC 81007, 84200.8
October 22, 2026 (E-12)	<u>SECOND CAMPAIGN STATEMENT</u> Candidates who have a controlled committee and a committee primarily formed to support or oppose candidates or measures in this election file a <u>Form 460.</u> All original statements must be received by personal delivery or first class mail. GC §84200.8
July 31, 2026	<u>SEMI-ANNUAL CAMPAIGN STATEMENT</u> Candidates who have a controlled committee and a committee primarily formed to support or oppose candidates or measures in this election file a <u>Form 460.</u> All original statement must be received by personal delivery or first class mail. GC §81007, 84200

CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE FORMS

Campaign disclosure requirements for candidates and controlled committees participating in the November 3, 2026 General Election are as follows:

FORM 700	<u>STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS</u> Candidates must file no later than August 7, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. GC §87302.3(a)
FORM 501	<u>CANDIDATE INTENTION STATEMENT</u> Candidates who intend to receive contributions from others for their campaign must file a Candidate Intention Statement, Form 501. GC §85200
FORM 470	<u>OFFICEHOLDER AND CANDIDATE CAMPAIGN STATEMENT (SHORT FORM)</u> Candidates who anticipate receiving less than \$2,000 in contributions and spend less than \$2,000 during the entire calendar year, exclusive of the cost of a candidate statement if paid from personal funds, may reduce their filing obligation by filing this form. No further statements need be filed for this election unless the \$2,000 threshold is reached. GC §84206
FORM 470S	<u>OFFICEHOLDER AND CANDIDATE CAMPAIGN STATEMENT (SUPPLEMENT)</u> Candidates who have filed a Form 470 Short Form and thereafter receive contributions or make expenditures totaling \$2,000 or more are <u>required</u> to file this form with who original campaign statements are filed and with each candidate contending for the same office. The notice must be sent within 48 hours of receiving or expending the \$2,000. GC §84206
FORM 410	<u>STATEMENT OF ORGANIZATION</u> Recipient committees, including any group, individual, or candidate, that receives \$2,000 or more in contributions during a calendar year must file with the Secretary of State and the Registrar of Voters' Office, within 10 days of receiving the contributions. They must also include a \$50 payment made to the Secretary of State. Thereafter, the annual fee must be paid no later than January 15 th of each year until the committee terminates. GC §84101.5

FORM 410	<u>STATEMENT OF TERMINATION</u> Candidates and their committee are required to file semi-annual statements every six months until all campaign activity ceases, all campaign money is spent, and Form 410 is filed. GC §84214
FORM 460	<u>RECIPIENT COMMITTEE CAMPAIGN STATEMENT</u> A candidate or officeholder who has a controlled committee, or who has raised or spent, or will raise or spend \$2,000 or more during a calendar year in connection with the election AND/OR if \$2,000 or more will be raised or spent during the calendar year at the behest of the officeholder or candidate, is required to file this form. GC §84200-84216.5

Candidates and committees must file the original campaign statements with:

Imperial County Registrar of Voters
Attn: Josie Morales
940 West Main Street, Suite 206
El Centro, CA 92243
(442) 265-1072
josiemorales@co.imperial.ca.us

CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE FILING REQUIREMENTS FOR CANDIDATES & COMMITTEES

The Political Reform Act imposes certain duties and obligations on candidates, officeholders, committee treasurers and others participating in the political process. For example:

- Detailed records must be maintained for all financial activity, and contributions received for political purposes must not be co-mingled with personal funds.
- Campaign statements must be filed at specified times disclosing contributions received, expenditures made, and other financial information. In some cases, candidates can avoid filing long form campaign statements by submitting a "Candidate and Officeholder Campaign Statement Short Form (Form 470)."
- Campaign statements must be hand delivered or postmarked as first-class mail by the legal filing deadline date established by law. NOTE: The second pre-election statement must be filed in person or guaranteed overnight delivery. Mail, which is not received by the filing officer, shall be presumed not to have been sent unless the filer possesses a postal receipt establishing the date of the deposit, and the name and address of the addressee.
- The Political Reform Act provides a formula for assessing late fines of original campaign statements filed in the Registrar of Voters Office. The fine is \$10 per day, starting the day after the filing deadline, until the statement is filed; however, no liability may exceed the cumulative amount of reported contributions and expenditures of the Form 460 or \$100, whichever is greater.

Failure to submit a required statement is a misdemeanor. Persons who fail to submit required statements are referred to the Fair Political Practices Commission.

UNCUSSESSFUL CANDIDATES

Defeated candidates must file campaign disclosure reports until the campaign committee has been terminated by filing Form 410.

It is recommended that campaign disclosure statements be mailed by certified mail or by purchasing a certificate of mailing. This will eliminate any question regarding receipt of your statement.

Unsigned forms are incomplete and are not considered filed until they are signed.

GENERAL CAMPAIGN INFORMATION

LEGISLATIVE INTENT

Pursuant to Chapter 976, 1977 Statutes, the Legislature finds and declares:

- a) That a need exists for adequate identification of the source of campaign appeals directed at the voters in order to assist them in making rational decisions at the polls.
- b) That by requiring such identification of campaign literature, the public is better able to evaluate the source of campaign material, may be more adequately informed, and can better distinguish between truth and falsity.
- c) That by requiring identification, anonymous attacks, which cannot adequately be responded to in the heat of a campaign, will be discouraged.
- d) That by requiring identification, a candidate who believes they have been libeled may, more readily seek redress in a civil action for damages.
- e) That limiting identification requirements to pejorative campaign material is inadequate because subtle attacks on candidates or measures can be framed which appear to be supportive but, in fact, are pejorative.
- f) That a distinction needs to be made between campaign materials of small size that usually carry little more than a "Vote for _____" message, such as is often the case with buttons, matchbooks, pens, and the like, on the one hand, and campaign materials which carry more complex messages, on the other. In the case of the former, because of their characteristically small size and limited content, it would be an undue burden to require that identification as to such source be included.

MASS MAILINGS

Definition

"Mass Mailing" means over two hundred substantially similar pieces of mail but does not include a form letter or other mail, which is sent in response to an unsolicited request, letter or other inquiry. GC §82041.5

Manner of Sending Mass Mailings

- a) Except as provided in subdivision (b), no candidate or committee shall send a mass mailing unless the name, street address, and city of the candidate or committee are shown on the outside of each piece of mail in the mass mailing and on at least one of the inserts included within each piece of such mailing in no less than 6-point type. A post office box may be stated in-lieu of a street address if the organization's address is a matter of public record with the Secretary of State.
- b) If the sender of the mass mailing is a single candidate or committee, the name, street address, and city of the candidate or committee need only be shown on the outside of each piece of mail.
- c) If the sender of a mass mailing is a controlled committee, the name of the person controlling the committee shall be included in addition to the information required by subdivision. GC §84305

Newsletter or Mass Mailing

No newsletter or other mass mailing shall be sent at public expense.

GC §89001

TRUTH IN ENDORSEMENTS LAW**Legislature's Findings**

The Legislature hereby finds the following to be true:

- 1) The major political parties have become an integral part of the American governmental system required regulations as to their structure, governing bodies, and functions by state government in the public interest.
- 2) The Legislature has found it necessary and appropriate in the regulation of political parties to create and provide for the convening of state conventions, state central committees, and county central committees for parties qualified by law to participate in the direct primary election, by statute.
- 3) Over the several years preceding the adoption of this section organizations of electors using as a part of their names the name of a political party qualified to participate in the direct primary election have endorsed candidates for nomination of that party for partisan office in the direct primary election and have publicized and promulgated such endorsements in a manner which has resulted in considerable public doubt and confusion as to whether such endorsements are those of a private group of citizens or of an official governing body of a political party.
- 4) The voting public is entitled to protection by law from deception in political campaigns in the same manner and for the same reasons that it is entitled to protection from deception by advertisers of commercial products. EC §20001

Restraining Order or Injunction

The superior court, in any case brought before it by any registered voter, may issue a temporary or permanent restraining order or injunction against the publication, printing, circulation, posting, broadcasting, or telecasting of any matter in violation of this chapter, and all cases of this nature shall be in a preferred position for purposes of trial and appeal, so as to assure the speeding disposition thereof. EC §20006

Representative Requirements

No candidate or committee in their behalf shall represent in connection with an election campaign, either orally or in campaign material, that the candidate has the support of a committee or organization which includes as part of its name the name or any variation upon the name of a qualified political party with which the candidate is not affiliated together with the words "county committee", "central committee", "county" or any other term that might tend to mislead the voters into believing that the candidate has the support of the party's county central committee or state central committee, when that is not the case.

This section shall not be construed to prevent a candidate or committee from representing that the candidate has the support of a committee or group of voters affiliated with another political party, which committee or group is identified by the name of that party, where the name of the committee or group also includes the name of the candidate.

Any member of a county central committee or state central committee may commence an action in the superior court to enjoin misrepresentation by a candidate or committee in their behalf, in the manner prohibited by this section, to the effect that the candidate has the support of the state or county central committee involved. EC §20007

Political Advertisement Requirements

Any paid political advertisement that refers to an election or to any candidate for state or local elective office and that is contained in or distributed with a newspaper, shall bear on each surface or page thereof, in type or lettering at least half as large as the type or lettering of the advertisement or in 10-point roman type, whichever is larger, the words "Paid Political Advertisement." The words shall be set apart from any other printed matter.

As used in this section "paid political advertisement" shall mean and shall be limited to, published statements paid for by advertisers for purposes of supporting or defeating any person who has filed for an elective state or local office. EC §20008

Simulated Ballot Requirements

- a) Every simulated ballot or simulated sample ballot shall bear on each surface or page thereof, in type or lettering at least half as large as the type or lettering of the statement or words or in 10-point roman type, whichever is larger, in a printed or drawn box and set apart from any other printed matter, the following statement:

"NOTICE TO VOTERS" (Required by Law) "This is not an official ballot, or an official sample ballot prepared by the county elections official or the Secretary of State." "This is an unofficial, marked ballot prepared by _____ (insert name and address of the person or organization responsible for preparation thereof)."
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Nothing in this section shall be construed to require this notice in any editorial or other statement appearing in a regularly published newspaper or magazine other than a paid political advertisement.

- b) No simulated ballot or simulated sample ballot referred to in subdivision (a) shall bear any official seal or the insignia of any public entity, nor shall that seal or insignia appear upon the envelope in which it is mailed or otherwise delivered.

- c) The superior court, in any case brought before it by any registered voter, may issue a temporary or permanent restraining order or injunction against the publication, printing, circulation, posting, or distribution of any matter in violation of this section, and all cases of this nature shall be in a preferred position for purposes of trial and appeal, so as to assure the speedy disposition thereof. EC §20009

PRINTING OF SIMULATED SAMPLE BALLOTS

In addition to any other penalty, any person who prints or otherwise duplicates, or causes to be printed or duplicated, a simulated ballot or simulated sample ballot that does not contain the statement required by Section 20009 or that uses an official seal or insignia in violation thereof, is guilty of a misdemeanor. EC §18301

DISTRIBUTION OF VOTE CENTER LOCATION INFORMATION

Any person is guilty of a misdemeanor who knowingly causes to be mailed or distributed, or knowingly mails or distributes, literature to a voter that includes a designation of the voter's precinct polling place other than a precinct polling place listed for that voter in an official precinct polling place list that constituted the latest official precinct polling list at some time not more than 20 days prior to the mailing or distribution. EC §18302

ELECTIONEERING / INTIMIDATION OF VOTERS / POSSESSION OF FIREARMS AT VOTE CENTER LOCATIONS

Legislative Findings

The Legislature finds and declares that no person, other than the voter and the election official, should have access to, or possession of, the ballot except as permitted by the Federal Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended.

Electioneering Within 100 Feet of a Vote Center Location

No person, on Election Day, or at any time that a voter may be casting a ballot, shall, within 100 feet of a vote center location or an elections official office:

- a) Circulate an initiative, referendum, recall, or nomination petition or any other petition.
- b) Solicit a vote or speak to a voter on the subject of marking their ballot.
- c) Place a sign relating to votes' qualifications or speak to a voter on the subject of their qualifications except as provided in Section 14240.
- d) Do any electioneering as defined by Section 319.5.

As used in this section, “100 feet of a vote center location or an election official office” means a distance of 100 feet from the entrance to a building that contains a polling place, an elections official’s office or satellite location specified in Section 3018, or an outdoor site, including a curbside voting area, at which a voter may cast or drop off a ballot.

Any person who violates any of the provisions of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor.
EC §18370

Electioneering During Vote-By-Mail Voting

- a) No candidate or representative of a candidate, and no proponent, opponent, or representative of a proponent or opponent, of an initiative, referendum, or recall measure, or of a charter amendment, shall solicit the vote of a vote-by-mail voter, or do any electioneering, while in the residence or in the immediate presence of the voter, and during the time (they know) the vote-by-mail voter is voting.
- b) Any person who knowingly violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor.
- c) This section shall not be construed to conflict with any provision of the Federal Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended, nor to preclude electioneering by mail or telephone or in public places, except as prohibited by Section 18370, or by any other provision of law.

EC §18371

Compelling Another in Voting

- a) Every person who makes use of or threatens to make use of any force, violence, or tactic of coercion or intimidation, to induce or compel any other person to vote or refrain from voting at any election or to vote or refrain from voting for any particular person or measure at any election, or because any person voted or refrained from voting at any election or voted or refrained from voting for any particular person or measure at any election is guilty of a felony punishable by imprisonment pursuant to subdivision (h) of section 1170 of the penal code for 16 months or two or three years.
- b) Every person who hires or arranges for any other person to make use of or threaten to make use of any force, violence, or tactic of coercion or intimidation, to induce or compel any other person to vote or refrain from voting at any election or to vote or refrain from voting for any particular person or measure at any election, or because any person voted or refrained from voting at any election or vote or refrained from voting for any particular person or measure at any election is guilty of a felony punishable by imprisonment in state prison pursuant to subdivision (h) of section 1170 of penal code in for 16 months or two or three years. EC §18540

Solicitation Dissuading Persons from Voting

- a) No person shall, with the intent of dissuading another person from voting, within 100 feet of a vote center location, do any of the following:
 - (1) Solicit a vote or speak to a voter on the subject of marking their ballot.
 - (2) Place a sign relating to voter's qualifications or speak to a voter on the subject of their qualifications except as provided in Section 14240.
 - (3) Photograph, video record or otherwise record a voter entering or exiting a vote center location.
- b) Any violation of this section is punishable by imprisonment in a county jail for not more than 12 months, or in the state prison. Any person who conspires to violate this section is guilty of a felony.
- c) For purposes of this section, 100 feet means a distance of 100 feet from the room or rooms in which voters are signing the roster and casting ballots. EC §18541

Fine for Person in Possession of Firearm or Unauthorized Uniformed Personnel

- a) Any person in possession of a firearm or any uniformed peace officer, private guard, or security personnel or any person who is wearing a uniform of a peace officer, guard, or security personnel, who is stationed in the immediate vicinity of, or posted at, a vote center location without written authorization of the appropriate city or county elections official is punishable by a fine not exceeding ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), by imprisonment pursuant to subdivision (h) of section 1170 of the Penal Code for 16 months or two or three years or in a county jail not exceeding one year, or by both the fine and imprisonment.
- b) This section shall not apply to any of the following:
 - (1) An unarmed guard or security personnel who is at the vote center location to cast their vote.
 - (2) A peace officer who is conducting official business in the course of their public employment or who is at the vote center location to cast their vote.
 - (3) A private guard or security personnel hired or arranged by a city or county elections official.
 - (4) A private guard or security personnel hired or arranged for by the owner or manager of the facility or property in which the vote center location is located if the guard or security personnel is not hired or arranged solely for the day on which an election is held.

EC §18544

Fine for Hiring of a Person in Possession of Firearm or Uniformed Personnel

Any person who hires or arranges for any other person in possession of a firearm or any uniformed peace officer, private guard, or security personnel or any person who is wearing a uniform of a peace officer, guard, or security personnel, to be stationed in the

immediate vicinity of, or posted at, a vote center location without written authorization of the appropriate elections official is punishable by a fine not exceeding ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), by imprisonment pursuant to subdivision (h) of section 1170 of Penal Code for 16 months or two or three years in a county jail not exceeding one year, or by both the fine and imprisonment. This section shall not apply to the owner or manager of the facility or property in which the vote center location is located if the private guard or security personnel is not hired or arranged solely for the day on which the election is held.

EC §18545

Definitions

As used in this article:

- a) "Elections official" means the county elections official, Registrar of Voters, or city clerk.
- b) "Immediate vicinity" means the area within a distance of 100 feet from the room or rooms in which the voters are signing the roster and casting ballots. EC §18546

SOLICITATION OF FUNDS

Authorization to Use Candidate or Committee Name

It is unlawful for any person who solicits funds for the purpose of supporting or promoting any candidates or committee to include any part of its name the name of that candidate or committee unless that person shall have previously obtained the authorization of the candidate or committee or the candidate's or committee's designated agent to use the candidate's or committee's name in the name of that person.

Authorization by a candidate or committee shall not be construed as rendering the person soliciting funds a controlled committee as defined by Section 82016 of the Government Code.

EC §20202

Notice of "Not Authorized by Candidate" to be Included in Fundraising Communication

Any person who solicits or receives contributions on behalf of any candidate or committee for the purported and exclusive use of that committee or the candidate's election campaign and who is not authorized by the candidate or committee or the candidate's or committee's designated agent to do so, shall include a notice in any fundraising communications, whether through any broadcasting station, newspaper, magazine, printed literature, direct mailing, or any other type of general public advertising, or through telephone or individual oral fundraising appeal, clearly and conspicuously stating that the person is not authorized by the candidate or committee and that the candidate or committee is not responsible for the actions of that person.

EC §20203

OUTDOOR ADVERTISING – POLITICAL SIGNS

Each city and unincorporated section of Imperial County has an individual ordinance related to political sign regulations. For further detailed information on a specific area, contact the Registrar of Voters' Office at (442) 265-1060.

PENALTIES FOR FRAUDULENT VOTE-BY-MAIL VOTING

Voting More Than Once

It is a crime to vote more than once in any election.

EC §18560

Interfering with the Vote-by-Mail Voting Process

It is a misdemeanor to willfully interfere with the prompt delivery to the elections official of a completed application for a vote-by-mail ballot.

EC §18576

It is a crime to interfere with the prompt return of a voted vote-by-mail ballot or to vote or attempt to vote a fraudulent vote-by-mail ballot.

EC §18577, 18578

It is a misdemeanor to do any electioneering, or otherwise attempt to influence a voter, at the time (they are) voting a vote-by-mail ballot.

EC §18371

Vote-by-Mail ballot return envelopes are signed under penalty of perjury, a violation of which can result in a prison term.

Penal Code §126

OTHER PENALTIES

It is a crime to interfere with anyone's right to vote.

EC §18502

It is a crime to pay, or offer to pay, a person any amount of money or to give them anything of value in exchange their vote for a particular person or issue. Similarly, it is against the law to pay someone not to vote.

EC §18521, 18522, 18524

It is a crime to violate the secrecy of the ballot, or otherwise tamper with ballots or the voting system.

EC §18564, 18565

FEDERAL LAW PROHIBITING FOREIGN NATIONALS FROM MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS OR EXPENDITURES

Federal law prohibits foreign nationals from making contributions or expenditures in connection with any U.S. election (federal, state, or local), either directly or through another person. This prohibition applies to foreign-owned corporations and associations, as well as to foreign governments, political parties and certain individuals and partnerships. Additionally, U.S. candidates for federal, state and local offices are prohibited from accepting contributions from these sources.

The ban on political contributions and expenditures by foreign nationals was first enacted in 1966 as part of the amendments to the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA), an

“internal security” statute. The goal of the FARA was to minimize foreign intervention in U.S. elections by establishing a series of limitation on foreign nationals. These included registration requirements for the agents of foreign principals and general prohibition on political contributions by foreign nationals. In 1974, the prohibition was incorporated into the Federal Campaign Act, which gave the Federal Election Commission (FEC) jurisdiction over its enforcement and interpretation.

If you have any questions on this matter, please call the FEC in Washington, D.C. at (800) 424-9530 or (202) 694-1120.

ELECTION RESULTS / CANVASS / RECOUNT

TABULATION OF ELECTION RESULTS

Frequently Asked Questions:

Can a candidate view all parts of the ballot counting process? Yes, the ballot counting process is open to public observation. If you wish to observe the process, please contact the Registrar of Voters' Office to make a reservation.

How/where are results available on Election Night? Election Night results are available on the Registrar of Voters' website, www.elections.imperialcounty.org beginning at 8:00 p.m. Periodic updates are made available until all Vote Centers have reported. The Election Night results include all early voting and those votes that were cast in person at Vote Centers in Imperial County only. Results will not include any vote-by-mail ballots delivered on Election Day via precinct drop box, drop box location or U.S. Mail.

Are Election Night results final? No. California State law allows a specific period after the election for the completion of the official canvass. Results released on Election Night are semi-official.

POST ELECTION NIGHT RESULTS

Daily election report updates will be released at 5:00 p.m. beginning 2 days after Election Day. These results will first include vote-by-mail ballots received and processed on Election Day and during the 7-day period after Election Day ballots, which were post-marked on or before Election Day.

After all vote-by-mail ballots are tabulated, elections official will begin the process of verifying and tabulating provisional/conditional ballots cast at Vote Center locations. During this process, no daily Election Reports will be released until all provisional/conditional ballots are processed.

Supplemental counts of outstanding ballots will be released approximately 3 days after the election. These counts are conducted to get the majority of vote-by-mail and provisional/conditional ballots tallied during the canvass process.

Outstanding ballots may include:

- Vote-by-Mail ballots deposited at Vote Centers, drop boxes or via U.S. Mail on Election Day
- Vote-by-Mail ballots received via U.S. Mail, postmarked on or before Election Day, received up to 7 days after Election Day.
- Provisional/Conditional ballots voted at Vote Center locations.

CANVASS/CERTIFICATION

Canvass is the process of reconciling Election Day data and the supplemental counting of vote-by-mail ballots turned in at Vote Center locations, including provisionally and conditionally cast and write-in ballots. California law permits 30 days to complete the official canvass and certify the results of the election. The law recognizes the complexity of completing the ballot count and conducting a thorough audit of the election results to ensure accuracy. Part of the canvass process is a legally required manual recount of votes cast for all candidates and measures on the ballot in 1% of the ballots tabulated in an election. This manual process verifies the accuracy of the computer count.

Candidates and members of the public are invited to observe ballot counting and the manual tally of ballots from randomly selected tabulated batches.

STATEMENT OF VOTES CAST

Once the election is certified, the final Statement of Votes Cast will be made available on the Registrar of Voters' website.

DOCUMENT RETENTION

Certain precinct supplies and all voted ballots must be preserved for 22 months when a federal office is on the ballot and 6 months for most all other elections. If no legal action is pending at the end of this period, the documents may be destroyed or recycled. Unused ballots may be destroyed or recycled after the election.

REQUESTING A RECOUNT

A recount is conducted by the elections official for verifying the number of votes counted for any office or measure in an election. California Elections Code Division 15, Chapter 9, Sections 15620 through 15634 govern voter requested recounts.

Who may request a recount? Any voter of the state may file a request. EC §15620

Timing of Recount Request

The request must be filed within five (5) calendar days after the completion of the official canvass. The canvass is complete when the Registrar of Voters signs the Certification of the Election Results. EC §15620

Format of Request

The request must:

- Be submitted in writing. EC §15620
- Specify the contest to be recounted. EC §15620
- State on behalf of which candidate, slate of electors, or position on a measure (affirmative or negative) it is filed. EC §15620

- The request may specify:
 - The order in which precincts shall be counted. EC §15622
 - The method of counting to be used (computer, manual, or both) EC §15627
 - In which county/counties the recount is sought for statewide contests EC §15621
 - Any other relevant material to be examined. EC §15630

Place of Filing a Recount

- With the county elections official responsible for conducting the election, if the contest is not voted upon statewide. EC §15620
- With the county elections official of any or all of the affected counties if the election is conducted in more than one county. EC §15620
- With the Secretary of State if the contest is voted upon statewide. EC §15621
- With the City Clerk if it is a city election (or if the city has not consolidated with the county election. EC §15620

Notice of Recount

A notice stating the date and place of the recount will be posted by the elections official at least one day prior to the recount. The following people will be notified in person or via overnight mail delivery:

- All candidates for the office being recounted.
- Proponents of any initiative, referendum, or persons filing ballot arguments for or against any initiative, referendum or measure to be recounted.
- The Secretary of State if the recount is for candidates for any state or federal office, delegates to a national convention, or any state measure. EC §15628

Process of Recount

- The recount process is open to the public. EC §15629

- A recount shall start no later than seven calendar days following the receipt of the request and shall be continued daily except for Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, for not less than six hours each day until completed. EC §15626
- A manual recount must be conducted under the supervision of the elections official by recount boards, consisting of four voters of the county, appointed by the elections official. EC §15625

Result of Recount

- The results of a recount are declared null and void unless every vote in which the contest appears is recounted. EC §15632
- Upon completion of a recount, if a different candidate, slate of electors, or position on a measure receives a plurality of votes, the results of the official canvass will be changed and the election results re-certified. EC §15632
- A copy of the results of any recount conducted shall be posted conspicuously in the office of the elections official. EC §15633

Cost and Payment

- The elections official shall determine the amount of deposit necessary to cover the costs of the recount for each day. EC §15624
- The voter filing the request for recount must deposit, before the recount commences and at the beginning of each day following, such sums as required by the elections official to cover the cost of the recount for that day. EC §15624
- If upon completion of the recount the results are reversed, the deposit shall be returned.
EC §15624

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How may I apply for office?

You may visit the Registrar of Voters' Office located at 940 West Main Street, Suite 206 in El Centro or by calling (442) 265-1060 for information on contests, qualifications, filing dates and to determine if you are eligible to run for office. Information may also be made available at the Registrar of Voters' website, www.elections.imperialcounty.org. In the case of city council contests, please contact the respective city elections official.

May I have someone pick up my paperwork for me?

Yes; however, a letter of authorization signed by the candidate is required. The letter should include the candidate's name, office, residence address, publication address, if any, telephone number, email address and the name of the authorized person(s) that will be responsible for picking up and filing the candidate's nomination documents.

What is a Candidate Statement?

A candidate statement is a brief description of a candidate's education and qualifications to be included in the sample ballot and mailed to voters within an election jurisdiction. A candidate statement is optional. A candidate statement form is provided for this purpose along with instructions, provisions and word limit and counting guidelines. The candidate statement fees and word limit applicable to the district will be provided.

What is a Campaign Statement?

Specific campaign finance disclosure forms are required to report election campaign contribution and expenditure activities.

What are the office hours to obtain nomination documents, and how long will it take to complete documents?

The Registrar of Voters' Office is open between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, except on holidays. It is required that all candidates and/or candidate representatives make an appointment with an elections official to submit nomination documents. The timeframe to process candidates varies and depends on how efficiently the staff qualifies the candidate and how accurately the candidate completes required documents. It is recommended that candidates arrive at least 1 hour before 5:00 p.m. to file nomination documents.

Will I be able to obtain up-to-date filing information?

Yes, a list of the candidates who have been issued and have filed nomination documents will be available on the Registrar of Voters' website, www.elections.imperialcounty.org beginning on July 3, 2026.

Is it possible to correct the wording or spelling on a candidate statement after submission?

No. The statement may be withdrawn, but not changed, during the period for filing nomination documents. This means that you will be required to submit a signed written statement to withdraw your original statement then file a new statement during the nomination-filing period. If you wish to withdraw your statement and not submit a new statement, you have until 5:00 p.m. of the next working day after the close of the nomination period. After this period, your statement cannot be withdrawn. EC §13307(2)

Please review your candidate statement carefully for proper grammar and format before submitting. Any voter of the jurisdiction in which the election is being held, or the elections official may file a writ of mandate or an injunction to require any or all the data/materials to be amended or deleted during the 10-day public examination period. However, if the nomination period is extended for a particular office, the examination period for that office shall be adjusted. EC 13313(b)

Can a credit card be used to pay a candidate statement fee or purchase voter material?

No. Cash money orders, cashiers or personal checks are the only acceptable forms of payment. Checks should be made payable to the Imperial County Registrar of Voters.

If a contest does not appear on the ballot due to an insufficient number of candidates, can a candidate statement fee be refunded?

Yes. Candidates must submit a written request to the elections official requesting a refund no later than 5:00 p.m. on August 10, 2026, or in the case of an extended nomination period, 5:00 p.m. on August 13, 2026.

CONTACT INFORMATION & RESOURCES

IMPERIAL COUNTY REGISTRAR OF VOTERS

OFFICE HOURS

8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Monday – Friday
(Except for Holidays)

OFFICE ADDRESS

940 West Main Street
Suite 206 – 2nd Floor
El Centro, CA 92243

GENERAL INFORMATION

www.elections.imperialcounty.org

(442) 265-1060

ADMINISTRATION

Linsey Dale, Registrar of Voters
linseydale@co.imperial.ca.us

(442) 265-1060

VOTER REGISTRATION

Francisco Badilla, Elections Coordinator
franciscobadilla@co.imperial.ca.us

(442) 265-1060

CANDIDATE NOMINATION / CAMPAIGN FINANCE DISCLOSURES

Josie Morales, Office Technician
josiemorales@co.imperial.ca.us

(442) 265-1072

COUNTIES WITH SHARED DISTRICTS

Riverside County Registrar of Voters

2724 Gateway Drive
Riverside, CA 92507

(951) 486-7200
www.rivco.org/vote

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE

www.sos.ca.gov

Political Reform Division

1500 11th Street, Room 495
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 653-6224
Fax: (916) 653-5045

Elections Division

1500 11th Street, 5th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 657-2166
Fax: (916) 653-3214
TDD: 1-800-833-8683

FAIR POLITICAL PRACTICES COMMISSION (FPPC)

Advice/Assistance 1102 Q Street, Suite 3000 (866) 275-3772
Sacramento, CA 95811 (916) 322-5660
Fax: (916) 322-0886
Web: www.fppc.ca.gov

Enforcement Division (To report violations) complaint@fppc.ca.gov

FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION (FEC)

999 East St. NW (800) 424-9530
Washington, D.C. 20463 TDD: (202) 219-3336
Web: www.fec.gov

U.S. ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION (EAC)

1335 East West Highway, Suite 4300 (301) 563-3919
Silver Springs, MD 20910 (866) 747-1471
Web: www.eac.gov Fax: (301) 734-3108

CALIFORNIA STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL

1300 I Street, #125 Sacramento, CA 95814 (916) 445-9555	300 S. Spring Street, Suite 1700 Los Angeles, CA 90013 (213) 269-6000
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IMPERIAL COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

940 West Main Street, Suite 102
El Centro, CA 92243

(442) 265-1175
www.da.imperialcounty.org