President & Vice President
2016 Candidate Qualification Guide
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# Introduction

This document contains an overview of the requirements for accessing the ballot as a presidential or vice-presidential candidate in Colorado.

Use this guide as a reference tool only. Always refer to the United States Constitution, Colorado Constitution, and Colorado Revised Statutes for applicable laws.

## Basic Qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>35 years</td>
<td>Article II, Section 1(5), U.S. Constitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Citizen</td>
<td>Natural-born</td>
<td>Article II, Section 1(5), U.S. Constitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence</td>
<td>14-year resident of U.S.</td>
<td>Article II, Section 1(5), U.S. Constitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Term</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Article II, Section 1(1), U.S. Constitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Terms</td>
<td>2 terms</td>
<td>Amendment XXII, Section 1, U.S. Constitution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BECOME A CANDIDATE

All candidates for president or vice president should contact the Federal Election Commission for campaign finance information and other requirements not addressed at the state level.

Federal Election Commission
999 E. Street, NW
Washington, DC 20463
1-800-424-9530
Website: www.fec.gov

BALLOT ACCESS OPTIONS

PARTY NOMINATION

Step 1: Eligibility for nomination

Candidates must meet the basic qualifications for office.

A candidate must meet the qualifications for office outlined in Article II, Section 1(5) of the U.S. Constitution and meet the requirements established by his or her political party.

Step 2: Contact your political party

A major party or minor party presidential candidate should contact his or her political party for information about obtaining the party’s presidential nomination.

Colorado does not hold a primary election for presidential candidates.

Political Party Information

Step 3: Party submits nominating documents

Following the national party nominating convention, the party will submit to our office a certificate of nomination with the names of the presidential and vice-presidential nominees and the names of nine presidential electors. [Article II, Section 1(2) of U.S. Constitution & 1-4-302(1), C.R.S. & 1-4-701, C.R.S.] Minor parties should also submit candidate acceptance of nominations for the presidential and vice-presidential candidates.

The certificate of nomination and minor party candidate acceptance of nominations must be received by our office no later than 60 days before the general election. [1-4-701(3), C.R.S.] These documents can be mailed, hand delivered, or emailed to:

Colorado Secretary of State
Attention: Ballot Access
1700 Broadway, Suite 200
Denver, CO 80290
Email: ballot.access@sos.state.co.us
Step 4: Submit audio recording

Candidate audio recordings for president and vice president must be submitted to the Secretary of State no later than 60 days before the election. The audio recording must state the candidate’s name exactly as it appears on the certificate of nomination or candidate acceptance of nomination form, as this is how the candidate’s name will appear on the ballot. [SOS Election Rule 4.6.1]

Audio Recording Instructions

Step 5: Names placed on general election ballot

PETITION NOMINATION, UNAFFILIATED CANDIDATE

Step 1: Eligibility for nomination and petition circulation

Candidates must meet the basic qualifications for office.

A candidate must meet the qualifications for office outlined in Article II, Section 1(5) of the U.S. Constitution.

In order to be eligible to circulate a petition, a person must be a resident of the state, a citizen of the United States, and at least 18 years of age. [1-4-905(1), C.R.S.]

Step 2: Petition signature requirements

A petition must contain at least 5,000 signatures from registered Colorado voters who have not signed a petition for any other candidate for the same office. [1-4-802(1)(c)(l) & 1-4-904(1), (2)(b), C.R.S.]

Step 3: Review sample format

Petition formats must be approved by the Secretary of State prior to circulation. [1-4-903, C.R.S.]

Sample Petition Format – Unaffiliated (DOC)

Step 4: Update the sample petition format

Update the sample petition to replace all of the red instructional text with the candidates’ specific information.

The petition must contain the names and addresses of the joint candidates (president and vice president), the names of nine presidential electors, and must designate, in not more than three words, the political or other name that the candidate selects. No name of any current political party recognized in Colorado can be used, in whole or in part, for this purpose. [1-4-802(1)(a) & 1-4-303 (1), C.R.S.]
The petition may include one or more unaffiliated registered electors who are designated as the vacancy committee. [1-4-802(1)(e), C.R.S.]

**Step 5: Submit final petition format for approval**

You may submit either a hard or electronic copy of your final petition format to the Secretary of State for approval.

Hard copies should be mailed, hand delivered, or emailed to:

Colorado Secretary of State  
Attention: Ballot Access  
1700 Broadway, Suite 200  
Denver CO, 80290  
Email: ballot.access@sos.state.co.us

Our office will not begin to review or approve petition formats until two weeks prior to the beginning of the petition circulation date. Once the review begins, the Secretary of State will approve or provide comment on each petition format within two business days. [1-4-903, C.R.S.]

**Step 6: Receive approval for petition format**

Our office will mail you a letter of approval or disapproval. [1-4-903, C.R.S.]

For a faster response, please provide an email address where we can send your letter of approval/disapproval.

**Step 7: Start circulating petition**

Once your petition format is approved, you can begin circulating the petition on the 173rd day before the general election. [1-4-802(1)(d)(I), C.R.S.]

**Step 8: Submit petition, candidate acceptance forms, and presidential electors’ acceptance form**

The completed petition must be filed no later than 3 p.m. on the 117th day before the general election. [1-4-802(1)(f)(I), C.R.S.]

1. Complete the President Candidate Acceptance of Petition Nomination and Vice President Candidate Acceptance of Petition Nomination forms and have them notarized. [1-4-906, C.R.S.]

   The forms must state the candidate’s name the way it will appear on the ballot. Candidate names cannot contain any title or degree designating the business or profession of the candidate. [1-4-906 & 1-5-407(4), C.R.S.]

2. Complete the Presidential Electors’ Acceptance of Nomination form, which must be signed by the nine presidential electors.

3. Attach the notarized acceptance of petition nomination forms and the presidential electors’ acceptance of nomination form to the completed petition. [1-4-906 & 1-4-303(1), C.R.S.]
4. Mail or hand deliver to:

   Colorado Secretary of State  
   Attention: Ballot Access  
   1700 Broadway, Suite 200  
   Denver CO, 80290

**Step 9: Signature verification, notice of sufficiency or insufficiency, and cure**

Petition signatures will be verified by the Secretary of State and a declaration of sufficiency or insufficiency will be made no later than 96 days before the general election. [1-4-908(3), C.R.S.]

We will notify you of your petition’s sufficiency or insufficiency in writing. For a faster response, please provide an email address where we can send the statement of sufficiency/insufficiency.

If found to be sufficient, the petition will be deemed valid, unless a protest is made in writing within five days after the statement of sufficiency is issued. [1-4-908 & 1-4-909(1), C.R.S.]

If the petition is deemed insufficient, the petition may be amended (or cured) once no later than 3:00 pm on the 85th day before the general election. [1-4-912, C.R.S.]

**Step 10: Submit audio recording**

Candidate audio recordings for president and vice president must be submitted to the Secretary of State no later than 117 days before the general election.

The audio recording must state the candidate’s name exactly as it appears on the candidate acceptance form, as this is how the candidate’s name will appear on the ballot. [SOS Election Rule 4.6.1]

[Audio Recording Instructions]

**Step 11: Names placed on general election ballot**

**STATEMENT OF INTENT, UNAFFILIATED CANDIDATE**

**Step 1: Eligibility for ballot access**

Candidates must meet the basic qualifications for office.

A candidate must meet the qualifications for office outlined in Article II, Section 1(5) of the U.S. Constitution.

**Step 2: Submit statement of intent form**

All required items must be filed with the Secretary of State no later than 3:00 p.m. on the 90th day before the general election. [1-4-303(1), C.R.S.]
1. Complete the Unaffiliated Candidate Statement of Intent for President and Unaffiliated Candidate Statement of Intent for Vice President forms and have them notarized.

2. A nonrefundable filing fee of $1,000 payable by check or money order made out to the Colorado Department of State.

3. Complete the Presidential Electors’ Acceptance of Nomination form, which must be signed by the nine presidential electors.

4. Mail or hand deliver to:

   Colorado Secretary of State
   Attention: Ballot Access
   1700 Broadway, Suite 200
   Denver, CO 80290

**Step 3: Submit audio recording**

Candidate audio recordings for president and vice president must be submitted to the Secretary of State no later than 90 days before the general election.

The audio recording must state the candidate’s name exactly as it appears on the candidate acceptance form, as this is how the candidate’s name will appear on the ballot. [SOS Election Rule 4.6.1]

**Audio Recording Instructions**

**Step 4: Names placed on general election ballot**

**WRITE-IN**

**Step 1: Eligibility for write-in**

Candidates must meet the basic qualifications for office.

A candidate must meet the qualifications for office outlined in Article II, Section 1(5) of the U.S. Constitution.

**Step 2: Submit affidavit of intent**

Candidates for president and vice president must each file a write-in affidavit with the Secretary of State in order to appear on the write-in list as qualified joint candidates.

1. Complete the Presidential Affidavit of Intent for Write-In and Vice Presidential Affidavit of Intent for Write-In forms.

Write-in affidavits must be filed no later than the close of business on the 110th day before the general election. [1-4-1101(1) & 1-4-1102(1), C.R.S.]
2. Mail, hand deliver, or email write-in affidavits to:

   Colorado Secretary of State  
   Attention: Ballot Access  
   1700 Broadway, Suite 200  
   Denver CO, 80290  
   Email: ballot.access@sos.state.co.us

Step 3: Submit electors’ acceptance form

1. Complete the [Presidential Electors’ Acceptance of Nomination](#) form, which must be signed by the nine electors.

2. Mail, hand deliver, or email the electors’ acceptance form to:

   Colorado Secretary of State  
   Attention: Ballot Access  
   1700 Broadway, Suite 200  
   Denver CO, 80290  
   Email: ballot.access@sos.state.co.us

Step 4: Names placed on eligible write-in list for the general election

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**AUDIO RECORDING INSTRUCTIONS**

**Why do I need to submit an audio recording?**

In order to meet the required standards for accessible voting equipment, all county clerks in the state of Colorado must produce an audio ballot. The audio recording must contain the correct pronunciation of each candidate’s name.

**How do I submit my audio recording?**

Our office has set up a voicemail box specifically for this purpose.

1. Dial 303-894-2200.
2. Dial extension 6314.
3. After the voice prompt, clearly state your:
   - Name (as it will appear on the ballot; it must match the name you provided on your candidate acceptance or judicial intent form)
   - Office and Jurisdiction if applicable (for example, State House District 5 or District Judge 17th District)
   - Party Affiliation (not required for the nonpartisan office of RTD and judgeships)
4. Press “#” when your message is complete.

5. Follow the prompts to review/edit or complete/send your recording.

**FORMS**

All of the forms mentioned in this guide are available on the [Ballot Access Forms](#) page on our website.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you have any questions about the information in this guide or other concerns about accessing the ballot as a federal or state candidate in Colorado, contact us at [ballot.access@sos.state.co.us](mailto:ballot.access@sos.state.co.us) or at 303-894-2200 x6333.