



President & Vice President General Election

2020 Candidate Qualification Guide



Colorado Secretary of State
Elections Division
1700 Broadway, Suite 200
Denver, Colorado 80290

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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

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Age | 35 years [Article II, Section 1(5), U.S. Constitution] |
| US Citizen | Natural-born [Article II, Section 1(5), U.S. Constitution] |
| Residence | 14-year resident of U.S. [Article II, Section 1(5), U.S. Constitution] |
| Length of Term | 4 years [Article II, Section 1(1), U.S. Constitution] |
| Number of Terms | 2 terms [Amendment XXII, Section 1, U.S. Constitution] |

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.

[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 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)(I) & 1-4-904(1), (2)(b), C.R.S.]

Step 3: Receive petition format approval

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

The Secretary of State's Office cannot create a petition template until the candidate provides the [Presidential Electors' Acceptance of Nomination](#) form to our office with the nine presidential electors that will represent the candidate. The names of the electors will be printed on the petition.

Contact the Secretary of State's Office at 303-894-2200 x6333 to learn about the petition format approval process.

Step 4: 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 5: 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)(l), C.R.S.]

1. Complete the [Unaffiliated Candidate Acceptance of Petition Nomination for President](#) and [Unaffiliated Candidate Acceptance of Petition Nomination for Vice President](#) 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. Attach the notarized acceptance of petition nomination forms to the completed petition. [1-4-906 & 1-4-303(1), C.R.S.]

3. Mail or hand deliver to:

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

Step 6: Signature verification, cure, and notice of sufficiency or insufficiency

Petition signatures will be verified by the Secretary of State. 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, C.R.S.]

During the petition review, we will notify candidates of any errors or insufficiencies in the circulator affidavits. Upon receipt of such notification, candidates have five calendar days to cure the errors by submitting a new circulator affidavit that corrects the mistakes. [1-4-912(2), C.R.S.]

During the petition review, we will notify candidates of any signer signatures that do not match the signatures in the voter registration records. Upon receipt of such notification, candidates have three calendar days to cure the mismatched signatures by submitting a form provided by our office that is completed by the signer and a copy of the signer’s identification. [1-4-908, C.R.S.]

Step 7: 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 8: Names placed on general election ballot

STATEMENT OF INTENT AND FEE, 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

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.

- Dial 303-894-2200.

- Dial extension 6314.
- 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 form)
 - Office and jurisdiction if applicable (for example, State House District 5)
 - Party affiliation (not required for the nonpartisan office of RTD and judgeships)
- Press “#” when your message is complete.
- Follow the prompts to review/edit or complete/send your recording.

USEFUL LINKS

[Check your voter registration information](#)

[Political party contact information](#)

[Candidate information packets by office](#)

[Ballot access forms](#)

[Campaign finance information and TRACER](#)

[Cybersecurity for political campaigns—Belfer Center](#)

[Cybersecurity for political campaigns—Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency](#)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Questions about accessing the ballot: 303-894-2200 x6333
ballot.access@sos.state.co.us

Questions about campaign finance: 303-894-2200 (dial 3 then 1)
cpfhelp@sos.state.co.us

Colorado Secretary of State’s website: www.sos.state.co.us