

Duties of the County Chair



Ryan Jimenez
Staff Attorney
Elections Division



Topics Covered

- Resources
- Important Dates
- Duties of the County Chair
- Candidacy
- Ballot Certification/Preparation
- Election Night Reporting (ENR)
- Canvassing Procedures



Available Resources

- **Secretary of State**
 - Primary Calendar & Appendices
 - 2024 Candidate’s Guide
 - Training Materials
 - Election Judges and Clerks Handbook
 - Early Voting Ballot Board Handbook
 - Signature Verification Committee Handbook
 - Poll Watcher Handbook
 - Online Election Worker Training
 - Online Poll Watcher Training
 - Central Counting Station Handbook
 - County Chair Handbook
 - Advisories - Conducting Your Elections
 - Assistance by Phone and Email
- **County Election Official**
 - Early Voting
 - Contracts/Joint Elections
 - Voting Systems
 - Institutional Knowledge
 - Required Web Postings
- **State Chairs**
 - Party Rules
- **Texas Ethics Commission**
 - Campaign Finance



Websites

<http://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/>

<http://www.votetexas.gov/>



<http://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/>

Welcome to Texas Elections

The Secretary of State is the chief election officer for the State of Texas. The Secretary of State's **Elections Division** provides assistance and advice to election officials on the proper conduct of elections. This includes hosting seminars and elections schools, providing calendars, ballot certification, primary election funding, and legal interpretations of election laws to election officials. We also provide assistance to the general public on voter registration and other election issues through our 1-800 toll-free number, 1-800-252-VOTE (8683), and [via the Internet](#).



Voters



Candidates



Election Officials



Voting Technology



Election Results/Data

Upcoming Statewide Elections



November 7, 2023
Constitutional Amendment Election



November 7, 2023
Special Election for
House District 2



March 5, 2024
Primary Election



www.votetexas.gov

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Texas Secretary of State's voting website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Ballot?', 'Find My Polling Place', 'Election Results', 'Voting Issues for Texas Evacuees Due to Natural Disasters', and 'ID requirements for voter'. Below this is a header with the 'VOTE TEXAS.GOV' logo and a navigation menu with categories like 'VOTER REGISTRATION', 'VOTING IN PERSON', 'VOTING BY MAIL', 'VOTERS WITH DISABILITIES', 'GET INVOLVED', 'FAQS', and 'RESOURCES'. A search bar is also present. The main content area features a welcome message from Secretary Jane Nelson, a 'What do you want to know about voting?' section with a dropdown menu, and a 'LATEST TWEETS' section showing a message from @VoteTexas. The central focus is a large section titled 'The General Election Takes Place on' with the date 'NOV: 7: 2023' displayed in large, bold letters. Below the date, there are four calendar icons indicating key dates: '10 OCT Last Day to Register', '27 OCT Mail Ballot App. Deadline', '23 OCT Early Voting Begins', and '3 NOV Early Voting Ends'. A vertical list of blue buttons provides quick access to various services: 'AM I REGISTERED?', 'REGISTER TO VOTE', 'WHAT'S ON THE BALLOT?', 'VOTER ID', 'WHERE'S MY POLLING PLACE?', 'ELECTION RESULTS', 'ELECTION STATISTICS & TURNOUT DATA', 'APPLICATION FOR BALLOT BY MAIL', 'TRACK MY BALLOT', 'BECOME A POLL WORKER OR WATCHER', and 'FILE AN ELECTION COMPLAINT'.

- Available in Spanish and English
- Mobile Site
- Updated for each Uniform Election
- Please feel free to link to this website to assist in providing information to voters



DUTIES OF THE COUNTY CHAIR



Duties of the County Executive Committee

- Supervises conduct of primary (172.111)
- Approves primary contracts/joint primary agreements (31.092)
- Determines consolidation of precincts in primary election (42.009)
- Appoints poll watchers in elections with partisan candidates (33.003)
- Nominates to fill vacancies under certain circumstances (202.006)
- Adopts voting system in primary election (123.001)
- Conducts ballot drawing for primary election, if requested to by primary committee (172.082)
- Sets time and place for precinct conventions (174.022)



Duties of the County Chair - Generally

- Serves on County Election Commission (31.032)
- Serves on County Election Board (51.002)
- Provides list of judges for appointment by commissioners court (32.002)
- Provides list of potential election day clerks for general election for state and county officers (32.034)
- Provides list of early voting workers (85.009)
- Appoints judges for primary election (32.006)
- Appoints poll watchers for elections with party nominee on ballot (Not primary) (33.003)



Duties of the County Chair - Primary Election

- Filing authority for candidate applications (172.021)
- Serves as chair of primary committee, if established (172.081)
- Submit names of candidates in SOS candidate filing system (172.029)
- Conducts ballot drawing (172.082)
- Prepares ballots in primary election (52.002)
- Designates polling locations in primary (43.003)
- Procures and allocate supplies in primary, with approval of county exec. committee (51.003)
- Provides list of names for early voting workers in a primary election (85.009)
- Appoints signature verification committee in primary (87.027)
- Certifies names for general election ballot (172.117)



County Chair in Polling Place

- County chair may be in a primary polling place during the voting period as necessary to perform administrative functions related to the conduct of the election. (172.1113)



Distribution of Convention Notices

- Political party may prepare a notice for distribution notifying voter of party's convention process.
 - State chair shall prescribe form, which must be approved by SOS.
 - County chair may prescribe a more specific form, if approved by SOS.



Appointing Election Workers

- Appointing Authority
- Number Appointed
- Qualifications
- Duties



Who Appoints for Separate Primary Election?

Position	Appointer
Election Judge (Presiding and Alternate)	County Chair (32.006)
Election Clerks	Presiding Judge (32.003)
Early Voting Clerk	N/A - EVC is County Clerk/Elections Administrator (83.002)
Deputy Early Voting Clerks	County Clerk/Elections Administrator (85.0091)
Early Voting Ballot Board Judge (Presiding and Alternate)	County Chair (32.006 and 87.002(a))
Early Voting Ballot Board Member	Presiding Judge of Early Voting Ballot Board (87.002(a))
Signature Verification Committee Member	County Chair (87.027(b))
Central Counting Station Manager	County Executive Committee (127.002)
Tabulation Supervisor	County Executive Committee (127.003)
Assistants to the Tabulation Supervisor	Tabulation Supervisor, with approval of County Executive Committee (127.004)
Presiding Judge of Central Count	County Chair (32.006 and 127.005(a))
Clerk of Central Counting Station	Central Counting Station Manager or Presiding Judge of Central Count (127.006)



Who Appoints for Joint Primary?

Position	Appointer
Election Judges (Co-Judges)	County Clerk/Elections Administrator via “List Procedure” (172.126) Must have at least one co-judge from each party.
Election Clerks	County Clerk/Elections Administrator via “List Procedure” (172.126) Must have at least one clerk from each party.
Early Voting Clerk	N/A - EVC is County Clerk/Elections Administrator (83.002)
Deputy Early Voting Clerks	County Clerk/Elections Administrator (83.032)
Early Voting Ballot Board Judges (Co-Judges)	County Clerk/Elections Administrator via “List Procedure” (172.126)
Early Voting Ballot Board Member	County Clerk/Elections Administrator via “List Procedure” (172.126)
Central Counting Station Manager	County Clerk/Elections Administrator (172.126)
Tabulation Supervisor	County Clerk/Elections Administrator (172.126)
Assistants to the Tabulation Supervisor	Tabulation Supervisor with approval of the County Clerk/Elections Administrator (172.126)
Presiding Judges of Central Count (Co-Judges)	County Clerk/Elections Administrator via “List Procedure” (172.126, 1 Texas Administrative Code Rule 81.148)
Clerk of Central Counting Station	County Clerk/Elections Administrator via “List Procedure” (172.126, 1 Texas Administrative Code Rule 81.148)



Number of Personnel

Location	Number	Roles
Precinct Polling Location	-Minimum of 3 per precinct. -Maximum # of clerks set by appointing authority (county chair).	-Presiding Judge -Alternate Judge/Clerk -Election Clerks
Early Voting Personnel	-Recommend 2 per early voting location. -No maximum - appoint # of deputies necessary to conduct early voting.	-Early Voting Clerk -Deputy Early Voting Clerk
Early Voting Ballot Board	-Minimum of 3 – presiding judge, alternate judge, and one other member. (Separate Primary) -Minimum of 4-presiding co-judges and alternate co-judges. (Joint Primary) -No maximum – appoint # necessary for Board tasks.	-Presiding Judge -Alternate Judge -Early Voting Ballot Board Members
Signature Verification Committee (If any)	-Minimum of 5 members. -No maximum – appoint # necessary to conduct committee tasks.	-Signature Verification Committee Members
Central Counting & Central Accumulation Station	-Minimum of 3: CCS manager, tabulation supervisor & presiding judge. (Separate Primary) -Minimum of 4 for elections in which Co-presiding judges appointed. (Joint Primary) -No maximum – may appoint # of clerks and assistants to tabulation supervisor as necessary.	-Central Counting Station Manager -Tabulation Supervisor -Assistants to Tabulation Supervision -Presiding Judge -Clerks



Number of Workers Per Precinct

Number of Election Workers Per Voting Precinct (1 T.A.C. 81.117)
 (Includes one judge and one alternate judge who serves as a clerk)

Estimated Turnout Per Polling Location	Paper Ballot/Optical Scan (primary voting method)	Electronic Voting System (primary voting method)
200 or fewer	3	3
201 - 400	5	4
401 - 700	6	5
701 - 1,100	8	6
1,101 or more	12	8



Number of Workers – Joint Primary

Number of Election Workers Per Joint-Voting Precinct (1 T.A.C. 81.149)
(Includes two co-judges and two alternate judges who serve as a clerk)

Estimated Turnout Per Joint-Polling Location	Paper Ballot/Optical Scan (primary voting method)	Electronic Voting System (primary voting method)
200 or fewer	4	4
201 - 400	6	5
401 - 700	7	6
701 - 1,100	9	7
1,101 or more	13	9



Qualifications – Poll Workers

	Election Judge	Election Clerk
Qualified Voter of _____	Precinct (If unable to find qualified voter of precinct, may use qualified voter of political subdivision → clerk requirements)	Political Subdivision (County, City, etc.)
Can be an employee of political subdivision?	Yes – if there is no other legal or practical conflict, e.g. employee of candidate.	Yes – if there is no other legal or practical conflict, e.g. employee of candidate.
Can be a candidate?	No – if candidate for a <i>contested</i> office in election held on that day → cannot serve in a precinct for which candidate appears on ballot.	No – if candidate for a <i>contested</i> office in election held on that day → cannot serve in a precinct for which candidate appears on ballot.
Can be a relative of candidate?	No – if related within the second degree of consanguinity or affinity to an <i>opposed</i> candidate → cannot serve in a precinct for which candidate appears on ballot.	No – if related within the second degree of consanguinity or affinity to an <i>opposed</i> candidate → cannot serve in a precinct for which candidate appears on ballot.
Can be an employee of candidate?	No – if candidate is <i>opposed</i> and employer of judge → cannot serve in a precinct for which candidate appears on ballot.	No – if candidate is <i>opposed</i> and employer of clerk → cannot serve in a precinct for which candidate appears on ballot.
Can be employee of campaign?	No – if campaign manager or treasurer. Unadvisable – If serving other role within campaign.	No – if campaign manager or treasurer. Unadvisable – If serving other role within campaign.
Can be a public officeholder?	No – if they hold elective public office.	No – if they hold elective public office.
Can be convicted of election offense?	No – if finally convicted of election related offense.	No – if finally convicted of election related offense.



Qualifications – Early Voting Ballot Board and Signature Verification Committee

	Early Voting Ballot Board Judge and Member	Signature Verification Committee Member
Qualified Voter of _____	Territory served by early voting clerk.	The county in a primary election.
Must meet all other requirements of an election judge?	Yes.	No requirement.



Qualifications – Central Counting Station (CCS)

	CCS Manager	Tabulation Supervisor	Assistant Tabulators	CCS Judge	CCS Clerks
Registered Voter of _____	Political subdivision of authority establishing CCS	Political subdivision of authority establishing CCS	No requirement.	Political subdivision of authority adopting voting system	Political subdivision.
Registered voter unless...	Person is employee or it's the first year of adoption	Person is employee	County over >60K, N/A County <60K, yes or employee	N/A	N/A
Can be an employee of political subdivision?	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	Yes – if no other legal or practical conflict.
Can be a candidate or officeholder?	Yes – if general custodian of election records.	No.	Yes – if no other legal or practical conflict.	Yes – if general custodian of election records.	No.
Other requirements	Knowledge of voting system	Trained on voting system.	Trained on voting systems	None.	None.
Must meet other requirements of an election judge?	Yes.	Yes.	No.	Yes.	Must meet clerk requirements.



Duties

Position	Duties
Election Judge	Management of polling place on election day; preserve order and prevent breaches of peace. Management of clerks' hours and activities.
Election Clerks	Performs duties assigned by judge in conducting election.
Early Voting Clerk	Officer in charge of conducting early voting for the election. Also, maintains hours on election day for early voting activities. Provides notice of clerk's address per Section 83.010.
Deputy Early Voting Clerk	Also, an officer of the election for conducting early voting with same authority of early voting clerk subject to their supervision.
Early Voting Ballot Board Judge(s) and Members	EVBB processes early voting results for the election and processes provisional ballots.
Signature Verification Committee Member	SVC compares signatures on application for mail ballot to carrier envelope to confirm signature is that of the voter's.
Central Counting Station Manager	Management of central counting station and personnel; established written plan for station.
Tabulation Supervisor	Management of automatic tabulating equipment for counting ballots.
Assistants to the Tabulation Supervisor	Assists with automatic tabulating equipment.
Judge of Central Count	Maintaining order of station, and conferring with personnel and review of irregularly marked ballots.
Clerk of Central Counting Station	Assists manager or judge with functions of station.



CANDIDACY



Filing Period

- **Filing Period for March 5, 2024 Primary**
 - **County Chair and Public Offices:**
 - November 11, 2023 – December 11, 2023 (6:00 PM)
 - **Precinct Chair:**
 - September 12, 2023 – December 11, 2023 (6:00 PM)



Required Notice

- **NOTICE OF ADDRESS FOR FILING APPLICATIONS**
 - Posted by county chair (or secretary of the county executive committee)
 - Contains address at which county chair and/or secretary of the county executive committee will be available to receive applications on the **last day for filing an application**.
 - Must be posted not later than the day before the last day to file.
 - **Must be posted on the political party's Internet website or in the location where a candidate files for a place on the ballot.**
 - This deadline is not extended under Section 1.006.



Filing Authority

- **Filing authority for applications for the general primary election**
 - **State Chair:** for an office filled by voters of more than one county; or
 - **County Chair** or the Secretary (if any) of the county executive committee: for an office filled by voters of a single county. (Sec. 172.022)

NOTE: Filing may be accepted by an employee of the authority at the authority's usual place for conducting official business (Sec. 1.007).



Method of Filing

- Applications can be delivered **in person, by mail, fax, or email (in certain circumstances)**.
 - If by mail: Must look at time of receipt, **NOT** postmark.
 - Receipt = actual possession of filing authority or agent, or time deposited in the authority's mail box.
 - Cannot submit via fax **or** email if application requires a filing fee. SOS recommends not using fax or email if application contains petition.
 - Application cannot be submitted in parts. All parts must be submitted at the same time.
 - An application can be filed by email if the candidate is not filing with a filing fee.



Method of Filing cont.

- CANNOT submit application and filing fee at different times.
- Deposit check or money order ASAP to ensure there are sufficient funds to cover fee.



Candidate Applications

- **New Forms Manual**
 - Application for Party Chair on Primary Ballot (2-3)
 - Application for Place on the Primary Ballot (2-4)
 - Application for Place on the Primary Ballot for a Federal Office (2-5)
 - Judicial Candidate Application for a Place on Primary Ballot (2-6)
 - Petition in Lieu of Filing Fee and/or Petition for Judicial Office (For Use in Primary Election) (2-7)
 - Petition for Statewide Judicial Office on Primary Ballot (2-8)
- Applications and more can be found at:
www.sos.texas.gov



Petition in Lieu of Filing Fee

- Must be submitted in person, by mail, by fax, or email – fax NOT recommended.
- Must be submitted with application. Candidate cannot give you petition pages in parts.
- Must be reviewed by the chair or designee. The county voter registrar does not have any obligation or authority to review application on your behalf.



Judicial Petition

- **For candidates running for:**
 - Court of Appeals in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 14th Districts, and
 - All candidates running for judicial offices in Bexar, Dallas, Harris, and Tarrant counties

An extra 250-signature judicial petition is **REQUIRED** (in addition to the filing fee, or as 250 additional signatures that had to be collected on the petition in lieu of filing fee). (Sec. 172.021(e))

- **For candidates running for:**
 - Texas Supreme Court or
 - Court of Criminal Appeals

Candidates are **REQUIRED** to file a petition with at least 50 signatures from each court of appeals district in the state. (700 total signatures) (Sec. 172.021)



Review of Application

- **Form, Content and Procedure**
 - Was the candidate application submitted timely?
 - Was it filled out properly?
- **Eligibility**
 - On the face of the application, does the candidate meet the eligibility requirements associated with that office?



Eligibility

- **Felony Conviction**
 - Does the candidate have a final felony conviction? If so, have they been pardoned or otherwise released from the resulting disabilities? (NOTE: Not all offices prohibit felony convictions)
 - OAG Opinion – [KP-0251](#) – Felony Convictions and Candidacy



Accepting a Candidate Application

- Once application has been accepted, candidate information must be entered into SOS system and the applicable status should be listed for that candidate.



Rejecting a Candidate Application

- If a candidate's application is rejected, the candidate's information must be entered into the SOS candidate filing system and the applicable status should be listed for that candidate.



Withdrawal

- To be effective, withdrawal **MUST** be:
 - In writing, signed, and acknowledged (sworn to) by the candidate, AND
 - Timely filed with the filing authority.
- This has the effect of removing name from ballot. If withdrawal is submitted too late, candidate's name remains on ballot and withdrawal has no effect.
 - Last day to withdraw and have name omitted from primary ballot
 - **Tuesday, December 12, 2023**



BALLOT CERTIFICATION AND PREPARATION



Certification and Preparation

- **December 19, 2023:** Date by which list of candidates will be certified by state chair and will be ready to act on for most* offices.
 - State chair must notify county chair that the certified list is available.
- **December 21, 2023:** Date by which ballot drawing must occur for most* offices.
- Ballots must be prepared, tested and mailed out to eligible military and overseas voters by January 20, 2024.
- *Exceptions for offices subject to the extended filing deadline.



Ballot Drawing

- **Who conducts drawing?**
 - County chair or chair’s designee
 - Unless the county executive committee provides by resolution that the drawing is to be conducted by the primary committee.
- **When is the ballot drawing?**
 - Ballot drawing must be held no later than the 10th day after the date of the regular filing deadline.
- **Notice for Ballot Drawing**
 - Chair must post notice on the party’s website 24 hours preceding the date, hour, and place of ballot drawing
 - If the party does not maintain an Internet website, the party must post notice on the commissioners court bulletin board.
 - All candidates who provide an email address on their filing form must be notified electronically of drawing. (Sec. 172.082(e)).



Ballot Preparation

- Ballots must be formatted, ordered, and tested in time for mail ballots to be mailed in compliance with Section 86.004 of the Texas Election Code and federal law (UOCAVA, MOVE).
 - 45th day before Primary: **January 20, 2024**



Ballot Format – Joint Primary

- The county election officer shall prepare ballots in a joint primary so that each party's ballots are easily distinguishable. The county election officer may use different colors of paper in order to achieve this distinction. (Note: Yellow paper may not be used. Only sample ballots may be printed on yellow paper.)



CANVASSING THE ELECTION



Canvassing Requirements – Local Canvass

- **County chair or chair’s designee** and, if available, at least 1 member of the CEC shall canvass the precinct election returns for the county.
- Canvass is open to the public!
 - Notice must be posted 72 hours in advance
- Canvass is completed via SOS website.
 - Primary Canvass Date: **March 14, 2024**



Canvassing Requirements – State Canvass

- State chair shall conduct state canvass.
- Open to the public.
 - Notice must be posted 72 hours in advance.
- The official result of the primary election is determined by state's canvass of party returns.



BALLOT CERTIFICATION FOR GENERAL ELECTION FOR STATE AND COUNTY OFFICERS



Ballot for General Election

- **SOS Ballot Certification**
 - Nominees of Democratic and Republican Nominees (including eligible replacement nominees, if any)
 - Federal, State, District, County and Precinct Offices
 - Nominees of Minor Party Candidates
 - Federal, State, District Offices
 - Independent Candidates
 - Federal, State and District Offices
 - Write-In Candidates
 - Federal, State, and District Offices
- Ballot certification will be posted on the SOS website.



Questions?

elections@sos.texas.gov

