



**37<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Election Law  
Seminar for  
Cities, Schools,  
and Other  
Political  
Subdivisions**

**Breakout  
Session for  
Other Political  
Subdivisions**

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# Let's Get Started



89<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislative Session



Important Dates for the May 2, 2026 Election



Conducting Elections ~ Keep in Mind. . .



Let's Talk Bonds



Questions and answers

# What happened this past session . . .

A total of 9,456 bills were filed in the legislative sessions

6,253 bills filed in the House

3,203 bills filed in the Senate

Governor Abbott signed a total of 1,186

1,155 from the regular session

31 from the special session

# What happened this past session. . .

## Some of the election-related bills that passed include:

### SB 1025 - Texas Election Ballot Language (effective 5/24/25)

- Modified Election Code § 52.072 to:
  - Require a ballot proposition be printed in mixed-case typewritten letters (not all capitals)
  - Require a ballot proposition that imposes or increases taxes to include at the top, in capital typewritten letters of the same font size as the rest of the proposition, the statement “THIS IS A TAX INCREASE”
    - Similar to what already had been required for School Districts in a prior legislative session
- **SAMPLE LANGUAGE:**

Wonderland County Municipal Utility District No. 1234

Proposition A

THIS IS A TAX INCREASE

An operation and maintenance tax for road facilities authorized by Article III, Section 52, of the Texas Constitution, not to exceed twenty-five cents (\$0.25) per one hundred dollars (\$100) valuation of taxable property

# ...and there is more

## **SJR 37 - Texas Constitutional Amendment, passed November 4, 2025**

- “The constitutional amendment clarifying that a voter must be a United States citizen.”

## **HB 1522 - Agendas & Budget Documents - Government Code § 551.043**

(effective 9/1/25)

- Modified notice requirements for meetings conducted under the Open Meetings Act from a minimum of 72 hours to at least three (3) business days before the date of the scheduled meeting. Introduced new notice requirements for meetings where a governmental body will discuss or adopt a budget.

## **HB 640 - Definition of “regular business day” - Election Code § 31.122**

(effective 9/1/25)

- Clarified the definition of “regular business day” for the office hours of election authorities during the election period. Defines a “regular business day” to mean a day when the main business office of the county, city, or other political subdivision is regularly open for business.

## **HB 3909 - Wireless Communication Device at Polling Place- Election Code § 61.014**

(effective 9/1/25)

- Modified prohibition on use of wireless communication devices from within 100 ft. of a voting station to within the room in which voting is taking place. The presiding judge is required to post a notice of the prohibition in a prominent and reasonably visible location outside the room in which voting is taking place.

# ...and there is more

## HB 1661 - Election Supplies and the Conduct of Elections- Election Code § 51.005

(effective 9/1/25)

- Specifies that the authority responsible for procuring the election supplies for an election shall provide a number of ballots equal to at least the percentage of voters who voted in that precinct in most recent corresponding election plus 25 percent.
  - The number of ballots provided may not exceed the total number of registered voters in the precinct unless the county participates in the countywide polling place program.
  - The authority responsible for procuring the election supplies commits a Class A misdemeanor if the authority intentionally fails to provide an election precinct with the required number of ballots under this section.

## HB 2259 - Instructions for Application for BBM - Election Code § 84.0112

(effective 9/1/25)

- Provides that the instructions for the ‘officially’ prescribed Application for Ballot by Mail (ABBM) issued by the SOS must be printed in portrait orientation on a single piece of paper that is 8.5” x 11” using 12-point Calibri or Aptos font or larger if the size permits. **\*\*Make sure you are using the most current BBM application form. SOS Form 6-1, Updated 9/2025.**



## ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING YOUR TEXAS APPLICATION FOR BALLOT BY MAIL



### Section 1 – Voter information

Print your **legal name** (with suffix) and **residence address** (not mailing address). *Optional Information:* Providing this information is helpful to the Early Voting Clerk. If needed to clarify any information on this application and/or your voted mail ballot. Failure to provide your **voter registration number, voter registration precinct number, or telephone number** does not invalidate this application. Please check your voter registration before submitting an application. Changing your voter registration address after submitting an application could result in your ballot being rejected. You must provide your Texas Driver's License, Texas Identification Card, or Election Identification Certificate number. If you have not been issued one of these numbers, provide the last four digits of your Social Security Number. If you have not been issued any of these required numbers, check the relevant box.

### Section 2 – Where to mail my ballot

Your ballot will be mailed to your residence or mailing address unless you qualify for one of these exceptions:

- **65 years of age or older, or have a disability** – Your ballot can be mailed to a hospital, nursing home, long-term care facility, retirement center, assisted living facility, or a close relative (state your relationship);
- **Confined in jail or involuntarily civilly committed** – Your ballot can be mailed to a jail, facility, or a close relative (state your relationship); or
- **Expected absence from the county** – Your ballot must be mailed to an address outside the county if you expect to be out of the county on Election Day and during any remaining period of Early Voting by personal appearance after you submit your application.

### Section 3 – Reason for applying and ballots requested

Check the box that best describes your reason for voting by mail:

- **65 years of age or older** – You must turn 65 no later than Election Day.
- **Disability** – You affirm that, “I have a sickness or physical condition that prevents me from appearing at the polling place on Election Day without a likelihood of needing personal assistance or injuring my health,” as defined in Texas Election Code §2.002(a).
- **Expected to give birth within three weeks before or after Election Day**
- **Confined in jail or involuntarily civilly committed** – At the time you submit your application, you are either: (1) Confined in jail serving a misdemeanor sentence for a term that ends on or after Election Day; (2) Pending trial after denial of bail; (3) Without bail pending an appeal of a felony conviction; (4) Pending trial or appeal on a bailable offense for which release on bail before Election Day is unlikely; or (5) Are involuntarily civilly committed under Chapter 841, Health and Safety Code.
- **Expected absence from the county** – List the dates during which you can receive mail at the address outside of the county.

Then, below the reason you selected, check the corresponding box(es) for the election(s) you want to receive a ballot for. Only voters 65 years of age or older, or have a disability, are eligible for an *annual application*. An annual application, submitted within 60 days of an election in the following calendar year, will be valid for all elections held during that year. To ensure you receive all appropriate

**Section 3 (continued)**  
ballots, your application may be forwarded to other entities holding elections. As a result, you may receive a ballot for other elections in addition to the ballot you originally requested.

### Section 4 – Applicant, sign here

The boxes require your original signature signed and dated in ink. A witness must complete Section 5 if you are unable to sign and you make a mark instead of a signature, or you are unable to sign or make a mark.

### Section 5 – Witness and/or assistant, sign here

- Check the relevant box and complete this section if the applicant is unable to make a mark in Section 4. Do not sign for the voter in Section 4.
- **Witness** – Check the relevant box if you witnessed the applicant make a mark or the applicant could not sign in Section 4 and you are signing on his or her behalf. Do not sign for the voter in Section 4. State your relationship to the applicant and complete this section. Acting as a witness for more than one applicant in the same election or for more than one applicant for an annual application for ballot by mail in the same calendar year is a *Class B Misdemeanor*, unless you are related to the applicants as a parent, grandparent, spouse, child, or sibling.
- **Assistant** – Check the relevant box and complete this section if you assisted the applicant in filling out this application in his or her presence or submitted on his or her behalf (by mail, email, or fax). Providing assistance without disclosing the information required in this section is a *Class A Misdemeanor*.

### Submitting your application

Acceptable methods include:

- **In-person** delivery by the voter to your Early Voting Clerk;
- **By mail** (U.S. Postal Service);
- **Common or contract carrier** (via a bona fide, for-profit carrier); or
- **By email or fax**, but only if this original hard copy is received by mail within *four business days* of its initial submission. Call your Early Voting Clerk, the Secretary of State, or scan the QR code for the email address or fax number.

### Deadline to apply

Your application must be received by your Early Voting Clerk by the *11th day before Election Day*. If that day is a weekend or holiday, the deadline moves to the preceding business day.



### Questions?

- ☎ **Call your Early Voting Clerk**
- ➔ **Visit [sos.texas.gov](http://sos.texas.gov) or [votetexas.gov](http://votetexas.gov)**

**La solicitud está disponible en español. Por favor llame al secretario de votación adelantada para obtener una versión en español.**

PRINT ALL INFORMATION CLEARLY AND LEGIBLY. THEN, FOLD AND MOISTEN SHUT TO SEAL.

## TEXAS APPLICATION FOR BALLOT BY MAIL

**Voter information**  
*Failure to provide your voter registration number, voter registration precinct number, or telephone number does not invalidate this application*

Last Name	First Name	Middle Name (if any)	Suffix (Jr., Sr., III)
Residence Address (Number and Street)		Apt/Unit	
City	State	Zip Code	
<b>1 Optional information:</b> Providing this information is helpful to the Early Voting Clerk if needed to clarify any information on this application and/or your voted mail ballot.			
VUID Number		Voter Registration Precinct Number	
Telephone Number		Email Address	
Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy) <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>			

**!** You must provide one of the following numbers  
 Texas Driver's License (TX DL), Texas Identification (TX ID) Card, or Election Identification Certificate (EIC) number:

I have not been issued a TX DL, TX ID, or EIC number, and the last four digits of my Social Security Number are:  
 XXXX - XX -

I have not been issued a TX DL, TX ID, EIC, or Social Security Number

**Where to mail my ballot**  
*Select one option*

<b>2</b> An address from my voter registration certificate <input type="checkbox"/> My residence address <input type="checkbox"/> My mailing address	<b>OR</b>	Another address that fits one of the categories below Number and Street Apt/Unit City State Zip Code <input type="checkbox"/> Hospital, nursing home, long-term care facility, retirement center, assisted living facility, or a close relative (state your relationship) <input type="checkbox"/> Jail, civil commitment facility, or a close relative (state your relationship) <input type="checkbox"/> Other address outside the county
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**Reason for applying and ballots requested**  
*\*Primary elections take place in even-numbered years only*

<b>3</b> <b>My reason for voting by mail</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 65 years of age or older <input type="checkbox"/> Disability - I affirm that, "I have a sickness or physical condition that prevents me from appearing at the polling place on Election Day without a likelihood of needing personal assistance or injuring my health," as defined in Texas Election Code 82.002(a). <b>Send me a ballot for the following elections</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Application - I want to receive a ballot for all elections in this voting year. I qualify because I am 65 years of age or older, or have a disability. I would like to vote in a primary election* for the following party and any resulting runoff: <input type="checkbox"/> Democratic Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Any resulting runoff <input type="checkbox"/> Republican Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Any resulting runoff <input type="checkbox"/> Do not send me a ballot for a primary election	<b>OR</b>	<b>My reason for voting by mail</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Expected to give birth within three weeks before or after Election Day <input type="checkbox"/> Expected absence from the county - The dates during which I can receive mail at the address outside of the county are: _____ / _____ / _____ to _____ / _____ / _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Confined in jail or involuntarily civilly committed <b>Send me a ballot for the following elections</b> <input type="checkbox"/> May Election <input type="checkbox"/> Special Election (name or date, if known) <input type="checkbox"/> November Election <input type="checkbox"/> Any resulting runoff I would like to vote in a primary election* for the following party and any resulting runoff: <input type="checkbox"/> Democratic Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Any resulting runoff <input type="checkbox"/> Republican Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Any resulting runoff
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**!**  
**Applicant, sign here**

**4** I certify that the information given in this application is true, and I understand that giving false information in this application is a crime. The box below requires your original signature signed in ink. A witness must complete Section 5 if you are unable to sign and you make a mark instead of a signature, or you are unable to sign or make a mark.

X	Date (mm/dd/yyyy) <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
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**!**  
**Witness and/or assistant, sign here**  
*For definition of witness and assistant, see the application instructions*

<b>5</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Check this box and complete this section if the applicant is unable to make a mark in Section 4. Do not sign for the voter in Section 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Witness - Check this box if you witnessed the applicant make a mark or the applicant could not sign in Section 4 and you are signing on his or her behalf. Do not sign for the voter in Section 4. State your relationship to the applicant below and complete this section. <input type="checkbox"/> Assistant - Check this box and complete this section if you assisted the applicant in filling out this application in his or her presence or submitted on his or her behalf (by mail, email, or fax).	Printed name of witness or assistant Residence Address Apt/Unit City State Zip Code Failure to complete this section is a Class A Misdemeanor if applicant's signature or mark was witnessed or applicant was assisted in completing this application. Signature of witness or assistant <table style="width: 100%; border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; vertical-align: middle; text-align: center;">X</table>
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# More new legislation . . .

## **HB 521- Curbside Voting & Assistance Procedures - Election Code §61.003, 64.009, 64.0322, 85.036 (effective 9/1/25)**

- Provides that electioneering is prohibited within 20 feet of a curbside voting parking space, in addition to the general 100 ft. prohibition
- Requires that curbside voters execute a form attesting that they are physically unable to enter the polling place. **(Failure to complete this form is a Class A misdemeanor.)**
  - During early voting a single worker may assist a curbside voter or when only three (3) or fewer workers are present.
  - Two (2) election workers must be present to provide assistance on election day.
- Requires election officers to complete an assistance form when assisting a voter. When curbside voters are given transportation by another person, the election officer must ask the person providing transportation if they have assisted seven (7) or more persons during the voting period, then they must complete and sign the SOS prescribed form (7-65, updated 9/2025) and deliver the form to the SOS' Office as soon as practicable.
- **Failure to complete the required forms is a Class A misdemeanor.**

Type of Election	Polling Location
Date of Election	Authority Conducting Election

**INFORMATION OF PERSON WHO PROVIDED TRANSPORTATION TO A TOTAL OF SEVEN OR MORE CURBSIDE VOTERS DURING EARLY VOTING AND ELECTION DAY/ INFORMACIÓN DE LA PERSONA QUE PROPORCIONÓ EL TRANSPORTE A UN TOTAL DE SIETE O MÁS VOTANTES EN LA ACERA DURANTE LA VOTACIÓN ADELANTADA Y EL DÍA DE LAS ELECCIONES**

Signature of Person that Provided Transportation <i>Firma de la persona que proporcionó el transporte</i>	Printed Name of Person that Provided Transportation <i>Nombre en letra de molde de la persona que proporcionó el transporte</i>	Address of Person that Provided Transportation <i>Dirección de la persona que proporcionó el transporte</i>	Did the person who provided transportation function as an assistant to the voter under Chapter 64, Subchapter B in addition to providing transportation to the polling place? <i>¿La persona que proporcionó el transporte actuó como asistente del votante en virtud del Capítulo 64, Subcapítulo B, además de proporcionar transporte al lugar de votación?</i>	
			Yes/Sí	No/No

**Instructions:**

A person that provides transportation to 7 or more curbside voters to the polling place during early voting and on election day must complete and sign this form. If the person that provided transportation also assists the voter, the person must repeat the Oath of Assistance aloud and sign it prior to rendering assistance. If the person that provided transportation translates for the voter, the person must repeat the Oath of Interpreter aloud and sign it prior to translating. A person commits a Class A Misdemeanor if the person intentionally fails to complete this form.

Print

Reset

# Pay attention . . .

**SB 54 (89<sup>th</sup> Leg. Second Called Session) repeals certain provisions passed during the regular session via SB 2217.**

**Election Code § 63.011, 63.011(b)(1) and (b)(2), 11.004, 43.007** (effective 12/4/25)

\*\*See SOS Election Advisory No. 2025-16

- **REPEALS** legislation passed in 2025 Regular Session that would have allowed voters who moved within the same county to change their voter registration immediately, without a 30-day waiting period.
- **Allows a voter who moves within the same county to vote in the precinct of that county where they are registered (aka their former residence), rather than where they currently reside, if they are otherwise eligible and execute a statement of residence form (SOR) prior to voting.**

**\*You can find all of the Texas Secretary of State Elections Division Advisories at:**

**<https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/election-division-advisories.shtml>**

# When you are conducting your own election . . .

## SB 2964 Ballot by Mail - Carrier envelope defect - Election Code § 86.011, 86.015 (effective 9/1/25)

- Requires that if an early voting clerk identifies a defect in a voter's carrier envelope, the clerk must notify the voter of the defect and provide a **Corrective Action Form (SOS Form 6-17)** within two (2) days of discovering the defect. The **Notice of Carrier Defect Issued by the EV clerk (SOS Form 6-15)** must include an explanation of the defect and explain to the voter how the defect may be corrected by not later than the sixth day after election day. If the voter cannot be timely notified of the defect, the early voting clerk may contact the voter by telephone or email. Early voting clerks are no longer authorized to return the defective carrier envelope in person or by mail to the voter.
- The Notice of Carrier Defect Issued by the Early Voting Clerk also includes the 'Corrective Action Form for Defective Carrier Envelope'.
- **\*Note that these two forms must be translated into the same language in which the ballot by mail was requested.**

**\*You can find all of the Texas Secretary of State Forms at:**

<https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/pol-sub/index.shtml>

# Keep your eye on this law! SB 2753. . .

## SB 2753 Integration of Early Voting by Personal Appearance and Election Day - Election Code affected? *Too many to list!*

(effective as soon as practicable after the bill's effective date, but not later than August 1, 2027. The changes outlined in this bill do not take effect until the SOS's report is published!)

## Additional legislation passed . . .

HB 1620	HB 3575	SB 914	SB 510
HB 2253	HB 3629	SB 985	SB 523
HB 2885	HB 493	SB 1494	SB 1540
HB 3425	SB 447	SB 2166	SB 1569
HB 3546	SB 506	SB 2216	SB 1862
HB 148	SB 688	SB 901	SB 827

# Want to follow the status of proposed bills?

Register to receive legislative updates for the upcoming legislative session:  
<https://capitol.texas.gov/MyTLO/Login/register.aspx>

The screenshot displays the Texas Legislature Online (TLO) website. The browser address bar shows "capitol.texas.gov/Home.aspx". The page header includes "87th Legislature Third Called Session" and "Texas Legislature Online". A navigation menu at the top includes "Home", "My TLO", "House", "Senate", "Legislation", "Search", "Committees", and "Calendars". The "Texas House" section lists links for Home, Speaker of the House, Members, Committees, Committee Meetings, Committee Witnesses, Calendars, Current Amendment, Journals, News, House Research Organization, and Kids' House. The "Texas Senate" section lists links for Home, Lieutenant Governor, Members, Committees, Committee Meetings, and Calendars. The "Search Legislation" section features a dropdown for "Legislature: 88(R) - 2023" and radio buttons for "Word/Phrase" (selected) and "Bill Number". Below this is a search input field and a "Go" button. The "Additional Searches" section lists links for Text Search, Statutes, Bill Lookup, Constitution, Bill Search, Reports, Amendments, View Votes, Sections Affected, Administrative Code, and Legislative Archive System. The "How Do I ..." section lists links for finding bills, tracking bills, contacting legislators, finding votes, scheduling hearings, viewing bill text, and testifying at hearings. The "Access Mobile Version of TLO" section provides instructions for mobile access. The "Legislative Activity" section lists video broadcasts, today's calendars, meetings, filed bills, and votes for both the House and Senate. The "Legislative Process" section includes links for "How a Bill Becomes Law", "How to Follow A Bill", "Dates of Interest", and "Glossary". The "Redistricting" section is partially visible at the bottom.

# Important Deadlines for your May 2, 2026 Election

**\*Be on the look out for the SOS Election Advisory  
with the detailed calendar\***

## MAY 2, 2026 – UNIFORM ELECTION DATE KEY DEADLINES

Monday, December 15, <u>2025</u>	Deadline to post Notice of Candidate Filing Period Cities, Schools and Other Political Subdivisions (**except Chapter 49 Water Districts)
Wednesday, January 14, 2026	Deadline to post Notice of Candidate Filing Period (**Chapter 49 Water Districts only) <u>First Day</u> to File for a Place on the Ballot
<p><u>Contact any county/counties that you are planning on contracting with for election services and find out their deadlines for:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Notice of intent to contract</li> <li>-When preliminary ballot language is due</li> <li>-Deadline to submit final ballot language</li> <li>-Proofing date for your ballot language and audio on voting equipment</li> </ul>	
Friday, February 13 (5 pm)	<b>Last Day to Order an Election for May 2, 2026 Election</b> <b><u>Deadline</u> to File for a Place on the Ballot</b>
Thursday, April 2	Deadline to Register to Vote
Monday, April 20	First Day of Early Voting by Personal Appearance (** Assumes SB 2753 is not yet in effect) Deadline to deliver ABBM to early voting clerk  <b><u>** (Note: Tuesday, April 21<sup>st</sup> is San Jacinto Day) **</u></b>
Tuesday, April 28	Last Day of Early Voting by Personal Appearance (** Assumes SB 2753 is not yet in effect)
Saturday, May 2	<b>Election Day (7 a.m.-7 p.m.)</b>

# May 2, 2026 Important Election Dates

- **ASAP – Contact county election offices and verify if they will contract for your May 2, 2026 election**
- **Monday, December 15, 2025:**
  - Deadline for most political subdivisions that have a first day to file candidate applications to post Notice of Candidate Filing Period
- **Wednesday, January 14, 2026:**
  - First Day to File for a Place on the Ballot
  - Deadline for Chapter 49 water districts and political subdivisions without a first day to file candidate applications to post Notice of Candidate Filing Period (Texas Water Code § 49.113)
- **Friday, February 13, 2026:**
  - Last Day to File for a Place on the Ballot (5:00 p.m. deadline)
  - Deadline for political subdivisions to order a May 2<sup>nd</sup> election
- **Monday, February 16: Presidents' Day**
  - Deadline for Chapter 49 water districts exempt from the use of electronic voting equipment to publish or mail notice of exemption (Water Code § 49.111)
- **Tuesday, February 17:**
  - Last Day to File a Declaration of Write-in Candidacy (5:00 p.m. deadline)
- **Friday, February 20:**
  - Last day for a candidate, including write-in, to withdraw (5:00 p.m. deadline)
- **Monday, February 23:**
  - Recommended date to conduct ballot drawing

# Important Dates (cont'd)

- **Tuesday, March 3 (60<sup>th</sup> day before election day):**
  - Last day to **deliver** notice of the election, including the location of each polling place, to the County Clerk and County Voter Registrar
  - Recommended date for political subdivision administering their own election to request from the County the initial list of voters who have submitted an annual application for ballot by mail
- **Thursday, March 12:**
  - Deadline to post Appointment of Secretary's Agent (if applicable)
- **Friday, March 13:**
  - Mandatory Secretary/Agent office hours begin (at least 3 hours/day during regular business days)
- **Wednesday, March 18:**
  - **FCPA/Overseas Ballot-By-Mail Deadlines:** The early voting clerk must mail a ballot to military or overseas applicants on or before the later of: (1) Wednesday, March 18; or (2) the 7<sup>th</sup> calendar day after the early voting clerk receives the application
  - **All Other Ballot-By-Mail Deadlines:** The early voting clerk must mail a ballot not later than the 7<sup>th</sup> calendar day after the later of the date the early voting clerk accepts the application for ballot by mail, or the date the ballot becomes available
    - If your district is conducting its own election make sure you have requested a list of person(s) who have submitted an annual ballot by mail application from the county in which your district is located

# Important Dates (cont'd)

- Thursday, April 2:
  - LAST DAY TO REGISTER OR MAKE A CHANGE OF ADDRESS FOR THE MAY 2<sup>nd</sup> ELECTION
  - First day to publish Notice of Election, if publication is chosen method
- Friday, April 3 (Good Friday) - Holiday:
- Saturday, April 11 (21<sup>st</sup> day before election day):
  - Last day to post Notice of Election in each election precinct, if posting is permissible and is chosen method
  - Last day to post notice of election on county website, if county maintains a website, or on bulletin board used for posting meeting notices
    - ❖ Consult county posting requirements for political subdivision elections under Election Code §§ 4.003(b), 4.008(a), and 4.009
  - Last day to post Notice of Election on the political subdivision's website (if applicable)
  - For a bond or other debt obligation election, last day to post election order:
    - ❖ in 3 public places within the boundaries of the political subdivision; and
    - ❖ on the political subdivision's website, prominently, and together with the Notice of Election, contents of the proposition(s), sample ballot(s), and if applicable the Voter Information Document, if the political subdivision maintains a website
- Friday, April 17:
  - LAST DAY TO NOTIFY ELECTION JUDGES OF DUTY TO HOLD ELECTION.
  - Notice must be given by the 15<sup>th</sup> day before the election or the 7<sup>th</sup> day after the day the election is ordered, whichever is later

# Important Dates (cont'd)

- Monday, April 20:

- First day of early voting by personal appearance (\*\*Assumes SB 2753 is not yet in effect)
  - ❖ Early voting must be conducted for nine (9) hours each weekday unless the political subdivision has fewer than 1,000 registered voters, then early voting in person must be conducted for four (4) hours per day (Election Code § 85.005(b))
- For bond and other debt obligation elections, deadline to post the election order and voter information document (*if applicable*) prominently in each early voting polling place
- Recommend checking with county election officials for any additional annual ABBMs

- Tuesday, April 21: San Jacinto Day - Texas State Holiday NO EARLY VOTING (\*\*BUT NOTE SB 2753 will require voting on holidays once it becomes effective\*\*)

- Wednesday, April 22:

- Last day to publish or mail Notice of Election, if publication or mailing is chosen method
- Last day for early voting clerk to receive an application for a ballot by mail

- Tuesday, April 28:

- Last day of early voting by personal appearance (\*\*Assumes SB 2753 is not yet in effect)

# Important Dates (cont'd)

- **Saturday, May 2: ELECTION DAY - 7:00 A.M. TO 7:00 P.M**
  - Make arrangements for any voter who decides to deliver their ballot by mail to the early voting clerk's office to have access to the location and to be able to present an acceptable form of ID, as required
- **Monday, May 4 (1<sup>st</sup> business day after election):**
  - 5:00 p.m. deadline to receive a domestic ballot-by-mail if it is postmarked by 7:00 p.m. on election day
  - Refer to SOS Election Advisory with detailed calendar for all late BBM/FPCA deadlines
- **Tuesday, May 5: First possible day to conduct official local canvass**
  - If political subdivision cancelled its election because candidates were unopposed for office, first day to issue Certificate of Election to each candidate and for candidates to take actions necessary to qualify for office (oath of office, sworn statement, etc.)
- **Monday, May 11:**
  - Last day for early voting ballot board to retrieve Provisional Ballots from the Voter Registrar
  - Last day for the early voting ballot board to convene to qualify and count any late domestic, overseas, provisional ballots, and any cured defective carrier envelopes

# Important Dates (cont'd)

- Wednesday, May 13:
  - Last day to canvass
- **Sunday, May 17:**
  - Deadline for election documents to be electronically available if requested under the Texas Public Information Act, for a fee of not more than \$50.00
- **Monday, June 1:**
  - Deadline for Chapter 49 water districts to submit an updated District Registration Form to TCEQ for a candidate election (Texas Water Code § 49.054(f))
- **Thursday, June 11:**
  - Last day of Secretary/ Agent mandatory office hours
- **Wednesday, July 15:**
  - Annual Voting Systems filing due to Secretary of State
  - Deadline for candidates to submit Campaign Finance Reports
    - ❖ Campaign finance reports filed by a candidate or officeholder of a political subdivision must be posted on the political subdivision's website not later than 10 days after receipt (Election Code § 254.0401(b))

# Conducting your Elections

Keep in mind. . .

# Stay on the 'Nice' list



Texas redistricting takes effect January 1, 2026 (\*Watch for SOS Election Advisories on ongoing litigation).

Congressional districts were redrawn and could affect your precincts. Make sure you. . .

- Verify your district's street guide with the County voter registrar!
- Your precinct(s) could have changed  
*This could affect your posting requirements!*

## Annexations/Exclusions

If your political subdivision has had any boundary changes (annexations or exclusions), you need to notify the voter registrar of the County or Counties involved within 30 days (Election Code § 42.0615)

Contact the County voter registrar and find out what they need to code your district correctly into their system, typically:

- Metes and bounds of the district
- A detailed map with all street listings
- A set of 'shapefiles' from your engineer
- A listing of street ranges and street names located in your district

Then verify and make sure your district is coded correctly - don't wait until you get a panicked call during early voting or on election day!

# Let's remember

## Renting Electronic Voting Equipment

There are **NO** third-party vendors currently renting equipment certified by the SOS to political subdivisions!

Counties are **not** required to contract with political subdivisions for May 2026 elections.

## **Who is going to administer your election?**

**County Election Office or you, the political subdivision**

If contracting with the County election office, make sure to attend a planning meeting or obtain a list of their deadlines

*Even if you are not contracting with the County to administer your election, we always recommend attending the County's planning meeting(s) to keep up-to-date on what's happening in the election world*

How do Federal, State, and Local holidays affect your election?

## Know your election deadlines!

**Create a calendar marked with ALL deadlines so you know what document(s) are required and when they are due**

# How do you ensure accuracy for your ballot?

1. Communicate with the County conducting your election
2. Have a certified translator for your additional languages
3. Be aware of deadlines and give yourself enough time to thoroughly proof ballots
4. Spread the risk! Have multiple ballot proofers (including candidates!) that can look with fresh eyes
5. Manage version control. Correct multiple errors at once before producing new proofs. This keeps versions to a minimum and reduces the number of times something needs to be proofed
6. Re-proof ballots after changes or corrections are made ~ in all languages
7. See it for yourself! Proof the ballot on the voting machines being used by the County.
8. Proof the audio ballots as well – listen to your ballot in all languages!
9. Attend the County's Logic and Accuracy Test



# Keep your calm!

**Verify that you are using the most recent version of election forms from the SOS Website.**

The Texas Secretary of State's Office made major updates of all election forms in 2023, 2024, and **2025!**

**All election forms are available on the SOS website**  
**(<https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/pol-sub/index.shtml>)**

## **Look for the following:**

Application for Place on the General Election Ballot for CSOs (**Form 2-49**)

Prescribed by Secretary of State Previous Sections 141.031, Chapters 143 and 144, Texas Election Code; Section 11.055, Texas Education Code

*Replaces form 2--26*

**7/2025**



# Contracting with a County?

- ❖ Contact your County election official – are they contracting this cycle?
- ❖ Request a contract, find out if a deposit is due and, if so, when?
- ❖ Create a calendar with all State and County deadlines.
- ❖ Submit all required postings on time and obtain required certificates of posting.
- ❖ Understand the allocation of responsibilities between the county and your district ~ who does what?
- ❖ Submit ballot language in all required languages with fonts compatible with the County's programming software.
- ❖ Proofing process must be completed on paper, machine, and audio.
- ❖ Obtain a Sample Ballot.
- ❖ Does your district have a website? If so, are all required documents posted?
- ❖ Does the County have a County website? If so, check and make sure your Notice of Election is posted timely.
- ❖ Get a date from your County election official for final election results – know when you can canvass your election.

# Conducting your own election. . . . .

- ❖ Contact your County election official and voter registrar, let them know that your district will conduct its own election.
- ❖ Verify the district is coded correctly with the voter registrar.
- ❖ Create a calendar with all State and County deadlines.
- ❖ Submit all required postings on time and obtain required certificates of posting.
- ❖ Identify your early voting and election day polling locations.  
Set dates and hours for early voting.
- ❖ Locate eligible election workers and keep in contact!  
Set training dates for all workers.
- ❖ Who is creating your ballot? A vendor or you?
- ❖ Order all required election supplies for your election.
- ❖ Request a list of voters who may have requested an annual ballot by mail application from the County in which your district is located.  
Know your mailing deadlines for ballot-by-mail!

# Conducting your own election. . . . .continued

## ❖ Early Voting Ballot Board (EVBB), Texas Election Code Chapter 87:

The early voting ballot board shall be created in each election to process early voting results from the jurisdiction served by the early voting clerk. These ballots include ballots-by-mail, early voting ballots by personal appearance, and provisional and late-mailed ballots.

- Consists of Presiding Judge, Alternate Presiding Judge, and at least one other member.
- Eligibility to serve on EVBB is the same qualifications for Election Judges/Clerks (Election Code § 32.051).
- Know your notice requirements: The early voting clerk must post (at the main early voting polling place) Notice of Delivery of Ballots to the EVBB 24 hours before each delivery that is made prior to the time the polls open on election day.

**Download, print, and read the Texas SOS Handbook for Early Voting Ballot Board!**

**Review the Texas SOS 2025 presentation on EVBB & Signature Verification Committee at:**

<https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/evbb-signature-verification-committee.pdf>

# Additional info. . .

## Translation Requirements

- Under the federal Voting Rights Act, whether you are conducting your own election or contracting with the County, your ballot and all other voter-related materials will need to be in English & Spanish and may need to be translated in additional languages.
  - ◆ Additional information is available on the Department of Justice's website (<http://www.justice.gov/crt/about-language-minority-voting-rights>).
  - ◆ Harris County - English, Spanish, Vietnamese, & Chinese
  - ◆ Tarrant County - English, Spanish, & Vietnamese
  - ◆ Dallas County - English, Spanish, & Vietnamese

# Additional info

## Obtain or Bookmark

- **Secretary of State Website:** <https://www.sos.state.tx.us/>
- **2025 – 2026 Election Code**
  - Available online via: <https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/>
  - **You also can purchase a paper copy of the Election Code by contacting:**
    - Texas Election Laws
    - Eric Opiela PLLC
    - Phone: 512-791-6336
    - Email: [eopiela@ericopiela.com](mailto:eopiela@ericopiela.com)
- **Local Government Code**
- **Any other additional codes that affect your political subdivision (e.g., Water Code, Health and Safety Code, etc.)**
- **Texas Legislature online (for information about new legislation):**  
<https://capitol.texas.gov/>

# Additional information

## TEXAS ETHICS COMMISSION FORMS

**The Texas Ethics Commission updates forms on January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year!**

**Visit the Texas Ethics Commission Forms and Instructions Website at:**

<https://www.ethics.state.tx.us/forms/coh/cohfrm.php>

### **Contact Information:**

Phone: (512) 463-5800

TDD : 1-(800) 735-2989

# Let's talk Bonds



## Bond Ballot Language

There are specific requirements for bond and other debt obligation proposition and ballot language, which have been impacted by numerous new laws in recent years. Consult your district's attorney for more information and to confirm whether your language incorporates all new changes!

- ❖ **Remember** that because they will be publicly posted, any documents attached to the Order Calling, Notice of Election, and Voter Information Document (*if applicable*) must be translated into all languages required for that County
- ❖ If you are contracting with a County, verify the character limit allowed for a proposition. Examples:
  - ❑ Harris County has a limit of 900 characters per proposition
  - ❑ Montgomery County has a limit of 10,000 characters per proposition

## Voter Information Document

- Pursuant to Government Code Section 1251.052, a political subdivision with at least 250 registered voters as of the date the election is ordered must prepare a voter information document for each debt obligation proposition
- The voter information document must be posted in the same manner as a bond election order is required to be posted under the Election Code, including on the political subdivision's website

# Voter Information Document (cont'd)

- **The Voter Information Document Must state:**
  - The language that will appear on the ballot;
  - The following information, formatted as a table:
    - The principal amount of the bonds to be authorized;
    - The estimated interest on the bonds to be authorized;
    - The estimated combined principal and interest required to pay on time and in full the bonds to be authorized;
    - The principal amount of all outstanding bonds;
    - The estimated remaining interest on outstanding bonds;
    - The estimated combined principal and interest required to pay all outstanding bonds;
    - The estimated maximum annual increase in the amount of taxes that would be imposed on a residence homestead in the political subdivision with an appraised value of \$100,000; and
    - Any other information that the political subdivision considers relevant or necessary to explain the aforementioned information
  - Certain major assumptions incorporated into the calculations presented in the Voter Information Document

# Voter Affidavit – Water District Confirmation Elections

## VOTER AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF TEXAS §

§

COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_ §

I, \_\_\_\_\_, Swear or Affirm that:

*Name of Voter*

1. My Residence is \_\_\_\_\_ located within the territory of \_\_\_\_\_.

*Address*

*District Name*

2. I moved into the District on \_\_\_\_\_, and I established my Residence

*Date*

within the District for at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of this election.

3. I understand that:

a. "Residence" means domicile, that is, one's home and fixed place of habitation to which one intends to return after any temporary absence. (*Texas Election Code Section 1.015(a)*); and

b. A person does not acquire a Residence in place to which the person has come for temporary purposes only and without the intention of making that place the person's home. (*Texas Election Code Section 1.015(d)*)

4. On \_\_\_\_\_, I voted in the \_\_\_\_\_ election(s) held by this district.

*Date*

*Description of Election(s)*

5. I am a duly registered voter in \_\_\_\_\_ County, Texas. My voter

*County Name*

registration was effective as of the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_. My voter

*Day*

*Month*

*Year*

registration number is \_\_\_\_\_. True and correct copies of my

*Registration Number*

voter registration certificate and another form of identification acceptable under state law, if available, are attached to this affidavit. (*Texas Election Code Section 63.0101*). To the best of my knowledge, I believe that my voter registration is effective on the date of this election.

## Texas Water Code § 49.1025(c):

(c) In addition to the procedures for accepting a voter under Section 63.001, Election Code, the election officer shall provide to the voter the form of the affidavit required by this section. The election officer must receive a completed affidavit before marking the voter as accepted under Section 63.001(e), Election Code. If the voter does not submit a completed affidavit to the election officer or the information stated on the affidavit demonstrates the voter is not a qualified voter as provided by this section, the voter may be accepted only to vote provisionally under Section 63.011, Election Code.

# Voter Affidavit – (cont'd)

## VOTER AFFIDAVIT

• • •

By signing this affidavit, I swear, on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_,  
*Day Month Year*  
that the above information and statements are true.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature of Voter*

Sworn to and subscribed before me this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.  
*Day Month Year*

[Notary Seal or Name and **Title of Election Officer**]

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public, State of Texas, **or Election Officer**  
(other than Voter identified above)

*Form of Affidavit Pursuant to §49.1025 Tex. Water Code 072023*

## Note \*new\* reporting requirements for bond elections

- HB 3526 (effective 9/1/25) requires local governments to submit reports for bond elections to the Bond Review Board not later than 20 days before and 20 days after election day, and also creates an annual reporting process for bond elections.
  - The BRB is required to create a publicly available and searchable database containing the bond election information not later than September 1, 2026.
- HB 103 (effective 9/1/25) requires local governments to submit annual reports for bond and tax rate elections to the Comptroller. The initial reports containing historical information for the past 10 years are due by January 1, 2026. Thereafter, local governments are required to submit annual reports each year by August 7<sup>th</sup>.
  - The Comptroller is required to create a publicly available and searchable database containing the bond and tax rate election information as soon as practicable after January 1, 2026.

# Bond Election Tips

## Don't Forget for bond and other debt obligation elections. . .

- ❖ If you are contracting with your County election office KNOW their deadlines!
- ❖ For any website posting requirements (including those posted by Counties or directly by the district), take screenshots of all postings, including the website URL and date, for the Attorney General transcript file
- ❖ Make sure to find out: When does the County need your election order for a bond election to post at each early voting and election day polling location and how do they want it? Do they want hard copies or e-mail?

For the most up-to-date information from the Texas Attorney General's office on new legislation and requirements for bond transcripts, visit their All Bond Counsel letter website, <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/public-finance/all-bond-counsel-letters>



A candy cane for  
your questions?

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your presence. It is an honor to present at the 37<sup>th</sup> Annual SOS Conference for Cities, Schools, and Other Political Subdivisions.

Happy Holidays and best wishes for the New Year!

# Thank you!

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