

Becoming A Candidate

What is a Candidate?

A candidate is defined in 97.021(7), Florida Statutes, as any person to whom any one or more of the following applies:

- Any person who seeks to qualify for nomination or election by means of a petitioning process.
- Any person who seeks to qualify for election as a write-in candidate.
- Any person who receives contributions or makes expenditures or gives their consent for any other person to receive contributions or make expenditures with a view to bringing about their nomination or election to, or retention in, public office.
- Any person who appoints a treasurer and designates a primary depository; or
- Any person who files qualification papers and subscribes to a candidate's oath as required by law.

However, this definition does not include any candidate for a political party executive committee.

Note...

- County Commission candidates for districts 1-5 must reside in the district for which they are qualifying **at the time of being elected** to office.
- School Board candidates must reside in the district for which they are qualifying **at the time of qualifying**.
- If required, one's current position or office must be resigned under the "resign to run" law (99.012(3), Florida Statutes).

When do I announce my candidacy?

- Candidacy may be announced at any time.
- Must file Appointment of Campaign Treasurer and Designation of Campaign Depository (**Form DS-DE 9**) with the Supervisor of Elections office **BEFORE** you collect any money toward your candidacy, spend any money in furtherance of your candidacy, collect signatures to qualify by the petition process, or open a bank account. (106.021, Florida Statutes).
- Must file a Statement of Candidate (**Form DS-DE 84**) within ten (10) days of filing the Appointment of Campaign Treasurer and Designation of Campaign Depository (106.023, Florida Statutes).
- A Judicial candidate must file a Statement of Candidate for Judicial Office (**Form DS-DE 83**) within ten (10) days of filing the

Appointment of Campaign Treasurer and Designation of Campaign Depository (106.023, Florida Statutes).

- Legislative Candidates must contact the filing officer with the Department of State Division of Elections.

Is it possible to run for a different office after I become a candidate?

Yes, under 106.021 (1)(a), Florida Statutes, you may change your mind and run for a different office after becoming a candidate, providing that you do the following.

- File a new Appointment of Campaign Treasurer and Designation of Campaign Depository, designating the new office.
- The candidate must notify all contributors in writing of the change in designation of the office he or she is seeking within fifteen (15) days and offer to return pro rata, upon their request, those contributions given in support of the original office sought. The Request for Return of Contributions (Form DS-DE 86) may be used for such purpose.
- Please review F.S. 106.021 for all requirements related to the return of contributions if requested or the use of contributions if no request to return is made.

Stop in and visit

If you are interested in becoming a candidate, please stop by our office where we can provide you some additional information and answer any questions you may have.