



Committee of Seventy

Join us in our campaign for better government

How to Run for Election Officer

**A Campaign Guide to Running for Judge of Election and
Inspector of Election in Pennsylvania**

January 2021

WHO WE ARE

Our Mission, Vision and Values

The Committee of Seventy is a nonpartisan civic leadership organization that advances representative, ethical and effective government in Philadelphia and Pennsylvania through citizen engagement and public policy advocacy. *We envision our City and Commonwealth with a vibrant local democracy and trustworthy government.*

Our Values:

Integrity: We believe government and those who serve in government must prove worthy of public trust. The Committee of Seventy believes that government works best when the public interest is prioritized over personal ambition and party. Strong institutions with safeguards against corruption, fraud and abuse of power are necessary to protect the trust of the public. However, the character and judgement of those who serve in government are no less important. Transparency and a free and independent media are essential to maintain this trust, guaranteeing that decisions and actions in government are subject to public scrutiny.

Representation: We believe government should be representative of and responsive to the people from whom its power is derived. The Committee of Seventy believes that a strong representative government exists when the processes through which we choose and petition our public officials are open, free and fair. Achieving this means that all eligible voters can cast ballots in secure and well-run elections, political boundaries are drawn without manipulation to advantage one group over another, and well-funded special interests are unable to overpower the public interest.

Effective Governance: We believe government is most effective when it functions as an efficient, modern and responsible public resource. The Committee of Seventy believes that to be good stewards of citizen resources, government should strive to be both effective and efficient in its operations. Government, we believe, owes it to citizens to get the right things done well. This requires identifying and implementing best practices and reforms that improve government operations and that leverage data to drive results and ensure transparency.

For more information about Seventy, our advocacy campaigns or programs and events, visit seventy.org or contact us at bettergov@seventy.org.

Contents

WHO WE ARE	1
PREFACE	3
Chapter 1 – LEARNING ABOUT THE JOB.....	4
INTRODUCTION	4
RESPONSIBILITIES	4
TERMS OF OFFICE	5
QUALIFICATIONS	5
PARTY AFFILIATION	6
TRAINING.....	6
COMPENSATION.....	7
FREEDOM FROM ARREST	7
CHAPTER 2 – WHO CAN RUN	8
RUNNING AS A MAJOR PARTY CANDIDATE	8
RUNNING AS AN INDEPENDENT OR MINORITY PARTY CANDIDATE.....	8
RUNNING AS A WRITE-IN CANDIDATE	8
CHAPTER 3 – GETTING ON THE BALLOT	10
INTRODUCTION	10
DEADLINES.....	10
SIGNATURES	11
NOMINATION PETITIONS AND NOMINATION PAPER REQUIREMENTS.....	12
COLLECTING SIGNATURES.....	13
CANDIDATE’S AFFIDAVIT	13
WHERE TO FILE	14
CHAPTER 4 – AFTER YOU FILE	15
OBJECTIONS.....	15
BALLOT POSITION.....	15
CAMPAIGNING	16
CONCLUSION	16

PREFACE

DID YOU KNOW how easy it is to run for elected office? Maybe not for Governor, Mayor or District Attorney, but there are other elected positions available right in your own neighborhood. If you're interested in participating in the political process and care about good government, you should consider running for office.

The purpose of this guide is to show you how to become a Judge of Election or Inspector of Elections at your local polling place. These poll worker positions are on the 2021 ballot across Pennsylvania.

Serving in one of these three positions is a great way to gain political experience, learn about and protect the voting process, and meet your neighbors. In fact, a voter's franchise can hinge on whether the poll workers understand and correctly apply voting procedures in their local precinct. It's an important job but a modest time commitment: two *long* days each year, or perhaps more if any special elections (to fill a vacancy) are scheduled, plus time for training sessions and studying election materials.

Do keep in mind: The Judge of Elections and Inspector of Elections are constitutionally enshrined positions with four-year terms and being committed to serve the full term is important. Those who take office but can no longer serve after certain point can and should resign (simply by sending a formal letter to county officials) but neglecting to do this can create challenges in filling the vacancy for the remainder of the term.

Although we use Philadelphia in many of our examples, the information in this guide applies whether you live in Philly, Altoona or Erie. The laws and policies we cite are current as of January 2021.

Finally, no guide can provide answers for every situation. If you can't find the answer you are looking for or have feedback on this guide, please contact Pat Christmas, Seventy's Policy Director, at pchristmas@seventy.org. Current and aspiring poll workers are also encouraged to join **The Poll Worker Caucus Facebook Group** to pose questions and share tips and ideas.

Chapter 1 – LEARNING ABOUT THE JOB

INTRODUCTION

When you go to the polls to vote on Election Day, you may wonder about the people who are working inside the polling place. Five of these people comprise the **Election Board: Judge of Election, Majority Inspector, Minority Inspector, Clerk and Machine Inspector**.

Election Boards have been an essential feature of Pennsylvania elections since at least the 1930s, and thousands of people are needed to serve on them every year. Based on size and population, all cities and counties in Pennsylvania are subdivided into **election districts or precincts**.ⁱ The City of Philadelphia, for example, has 1,703 election districts (called divisions in Philly). Each election district is supposed to have a five-member Election Board (although many don't, as we will explain). That means as many as 8,500 people are needed to work across Philadelphia on Election Day. **With approximately 9,000 precincts across the Commonwealth, upwards of 45,000 people would be needed every election to fully staff the polls.** Filling all these positions is difficult.

Three of the five members of the Election Board are elected: The Judge of Election, Majority Inspector, and Minority Inspector. The people who currently hold these positions were last elected in 2017. If they want to be reelected, they must run again in 2021. Anyone else who meets the qualifications for these positions can also decide to run.

Two of the five members of the Election Board are **appointed**: The **Clerk** is appointed by the Minority Inspector, and the **Machine Inspector** is appointed by the County Board of Elections.

Except where otherwise noted, most of the information in this manual pertains to the elected members of an Election Board.

RESPONSIBILITIES

All five members of an Election Board share a common goal to make sure the polls are operating properly and that everyone who is registered to vote is able to do so. They are required to be fair and impartial in performing their duties, irrespective of their party affiliation or personal biases.

All Election Board members are expected to be inside a polling place throughout Election Day. In Pennsylvania, the polls officially open at 7 AM and close when the last person in line at 8 PM has voted. However, the day starts before 7 AM when the polls are being set up and ends after 8 PM when the polls close and the votes cast on voting machines are tabulated.

After they are sworn into office,ⁱⁱ each Election Board member has a separate job to perform:

- The **Judge of Election**ⁱⁱⁱ has the ultimate responsibility for the conduct of a polling place and the personnel working there. They must take an oath to admit only those voters who are properly registered and entitled to vote, to prevent fraud, deceit or abuse, and to make

sure that all votes at the end of the day are accurately tabulated. The Judge is also responsible for opening and closing the polls, and for all the paperwork required on Election Day.

- **The Majority and Minority Inspectors**^{iv} are responsible for checking voters' registration documents and preparing certificates to authorize voters to cast their ballots. They ensure that the voting process is legal and administered fairly by verifying the signatures of voters as they sign the poll book (the big book on the table with the names of voters). The Inspectors are also responsible for checking to be sure the voting machine numbers are accurate at the end of the day.
- The **Clerk**^v is responsible for recording the order in which voters vote in a book separate from the poll book, and accurately recording the number of votes. They are appointed by the Minority Inspector in each election district.^{vi}
- The **Machine Inspector**^{vii} is responsible for preparing the voting machines so that voters may cast their ballots. They are appointed by the County Board of Elections and must take an oath to be in attendance throughout Election Day.^{viii}

All five members of the Election Board must take an oath that they have no direct or indirect financial interest in the outcome of the election.^{ix}

TERMS OF OFFICE

The **Judge of Election, Majority Inspector and Minority Inspector** serve for **four-year terms**. The **Clerk and Machine Inspector** are **appointed before each primary, general or special election**.^x

Any vacancies in the office of Judge of Election, Majority Inspector or Minority Inspector that occur *more than* five (5) days before an election are filled by appointment by the county's Court of Common Pleas. These appointees serve for the unexpired term of the person whose place they are appointed to fill. Any vacancies in those offices that occur *within* five days of an election may be filled by appointment by the county Board of Elections.^{xi} These appointees serve only on the day of the upcoming election.

Practically speaking, vacant positions are not always filled by a court order, but rather informally by any registered voter in the division in what are known as "curbside elections" because they take place on Election Day at the polling place where the vacancy exists. Positions filled by "curbside election" are for that Election Day only and not for subsequent elections.

QUALIFICATIONS

All **elected members** of an Election Board must:

- Be qualified registered voters in the election district in which they are elected or appointed.

- Be at least 18 years old.
- Have resigned from any city, county, state or federal appointed or salaried positions for at least two months before their election or appointment. This includes any municipal board, commission or trust in any city and also includes the court system. The only exceptions are district justices, notaries public and people serving in the state militia.
- Not be a candidate for any office to be voted for at a primary or general election at which they are serving (except for as a member of an Election Board).^{xii}

Committee people – who are individuals elected to help people within their election districts on behalf of the Democratic or Republican party – are permitted to run for a position on an Election Board. However, if elected, **they may not engage in any partisan political activities on Election Day** – even if those are activities usually performed by committee people, such as driving people to the polls or handing out campaign literature. Seventy strongly discourages committee people from running for the poll worker positions.

PARTY AFFILIATION

Election Boards are intended to be bipartisan.^{xiii} Optimally, the Judge of Election and Majority Inspector are from one political party, and the Minority Inspector and Clerk are from another political party or are unaffiliated.^{xiv} The “political balance” is tilted (3-2) by the party affiliation of the Machine Inspector appointed by the County Board of Elections.

However, an Election Board is not always politically balanced. In Philadelphia, for example, most election districts have many more Democrats than Republicans. Sometimes there isn’t even a Republican Election Board candidate on the ballot.

In other cases, such as when there is a vacancy in the Judge of Election, Majority Inspector or Minority Inspector positions within five days of an election, the appointment by the County Board of Elections or a “curbside election” may tilt the political party make-up of the Election Board for that Election Day only.

Usually, a political party imbalance only causes a problem when someone on the Election Board violates their obligation to be fair and impartial on Election Day.

TRAINING

All newly elected and appointed Judges of Election, Majority Inspectors, Minority Inspectors and Machine Inspectors are required to be trained by the County Board of Elections, or someone appointed by that office, on the use of the machines and their duties.^{xv} They will receive a small payment for attending the training session.

The Committee of Seventy strongly recommends that all Election Board members attend a training before every election and to review any available materials to learn new procedures or changes to the laws governing elections. Resources for poll workers can be found at votespa.com and, typically, on your local County Board of Elections website. Seventy has also posted supplementary resources and training opportunities at wevote.seventy.org.

COMPENSATION

In addition to a small payment for attending a training session, the County Board of Elections sets, within the limits set by state law, the compensation for all five members of an Election Board who work on Election Day.^{xvi} Numerous counties increased poll worker pay for the 2020 elections to attract new recruits and retain current poll workers amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. However, these rates could drop due to funding constraints. Check with your local county elections office to confirm the rates for 2021.

The Internal Revenue Service does not require compensation or payments received by members of the Election Board to be reported as “income.”^{xvii}

FREEDOM FROM ARREST

Although we hope this section does not apply to you, no elected or appointed member of an Election Board can be arrested on Election Day, including while setting up in the morning or transmitting election returns after the polls close. The only exception is upon a warrant of a court of record or judge for an election fraud, for a felony or for wanton breach of the peace.^{xviii}

CHAPTER 2 – WHO CAN RUN

You now know enough about the job of a Judge of Election, Majority and Minority Inspector to go to the next step: Do you want to throw your hat in the ring?

Judges of Election, Majority Inspectors and Minority Inspectors are elected every four years. They were last elected in 2017 and will be on the ballot again in 2021.

RUNNING AS A MAJOR PARTY CANDIDATE

- The best and most common way to proceed is to win a political party's nomination. For the Democratic and Republican parties, this is at the May 18, 2021 Primary Election. First you have to get your name on the ballot.
- Primary election contests in Pennsylvania are only between the Democrats and Republicans. Voters can only vote for the candidate of their same political party. (Independent voters and voters affiliated with minority parties are only permitted to vote on ballot questions at a primary election.)
- In the spring primary Democrats and Republicans in every election district nominate one candidate each for Judge of Election and Inspectors of Election. These candidates face one another in the November general election. The Inspectors of Election candidate who gets the most votes becomes the Majority Inspector and the candidate with the second highest number of votes becomes the Minority Inspector. Independents and third-party candidates can also run for Judge of Election or Inspectors of Election in the November General Election (see below.)

RUNNING AS AN INDEPENDENT OR MINORITY PARTY CANDIDATE

You can decide to avoid the primary altogether by entering the November general election as an independent or minority party candidate. This means you are not affiliated with any candidate who won the Democratic or Republican party's nomination at the primary election and who is on the November ballot.

However, this option is open *only* if you withdraw your registration in a political party at least thirty (30) days before the primary *and* remain unaffiliated until after the election.^{xix}

RUNNING AS A WRITE-IN CANDIDATE

You can also be a "write-in" candidate in a primary or general election, or both.

If you choose this option, your name will not appear on the official ballot presented to the voters, but a voter can write or type in your name depending on the voting system used in your county. Keep in mind that state law requires that County Boards of Election count and certify votes exactly

as names are written on ballots. Spelling counts! Circulating flyers or cards with your name would be helpful, but any such electioneering materials must clearly state who paid for it.

A write-in candidate *in a primary* must not only get more votes than all opponents in order to succeed, but also receive a number of votes at least equal to the number of signatures required on a nomination petition for that office.^{xx} However, a write-in candidate in the general election can win office with only one vote.

We recommend taking the nomination petition route if you're serious about running, as the number of signatures needed is very attainable and the end result would be your name on the official ballot.

To learn about nomination petitions, keep reading.

CHAPTER 3 – GETTING ON THE BALLOT

INTRODUCTION

Except for write-in candidates, all other candidates who want to appear on a ballot must file "nomination petitions" or "nomination papers."

Nomination petitions are documents signed by registered voters of a candidate's same political party petitioning the county Board of Elections **to print the candidate's name for that party's nomination** on the spring primary ballot.^{xxi} Only Democrats and Republicans can file nomination petitions.

Nomination papers are documents signed by registered voters of any party petitioning the county Board of Elections **to print the candidate's name** on the November general ballot.^{xxii} Only individuals who want to be independent or third-party candidates (in other words, candidates other than Democrats or Republicans) can file nomination papers.

Nomination petitions and nomination papers may be picked up at your County Board of Elections. (Visit votespa.com to find contact information for your local County Board of Election.) In Philadelphia, it's not uncommon for Democratic and Republican candidates for elected poll worker positions to receive nomination petitions from their ward leader or committeeperson.

DEADLINES

There are hard and fast deadlines for when you are permitted to circulate – and later to file – nomination petitions or nomination papers. Not knowing the deadlines may prevent you from being able to run, unless you are a write-in candidate (who does not need to file nomination petitions or nomination papers).

Deadlines and Important Dates for 2021

Tue, February 16	First day to circulate and file nomination petitions (13 th Tuesday before the primary)
Tue, March 9	Last day to circulate and file nomination petitions (10 th Tuesday before the primary)
Wed, March 10	First day to circulate and file nomination papers
Mon, May 3	Voter registration deadline for the Primary Election (15 days before the election)
Tue, May 18	PRIMARY ELECTION: Polls open in Pennsylvania from 7AM TO 8PM
Mon, August 2	Last day to circulate and file nomination papers ^{xxiii}
Mon, October 18	Voter registration deadline for the General Election (15 days before the election)
Tue, November 2	GENERAL ELECTION: Polls open in Pennsylvania from 7AM TO 8PM

**For a full set of election- and candidacy-related dates, go to VotesPA.com*

SIGNATURES

Candidates for Judge of Election and Inspectors of Election are required to obtain a **minimum** number of voter signatures on nomination petitions and nomination papers in order to get on the ballot. There is no maximum number of signatures a candidate can gather. But, just to be on the safe side, **we strongly recommend that you get at least twice as many signatures as necessary.**

A voter may sign only as many nomination petitions or nomination papers as votes that can be cast for that office—that is, one.^{xxiv} So, when you (or your designee) are collecting signatures, you should ask the voter if they have signed a nomination petition or nomination paper for anyone else seeking the same office.

Only voters registered in the same political party as the candidate and residing in the election district of the office being sought, are permitted to sign **nomination petitions**.^{xxv} Here is the number of signatures required:

Office	Signatures Needed on Nomination Petitions
Judge of Election	10
Inspectors of Election	5

The signatures required for **nomination papers** are a little different. Voters registered to *any* political party and residing in the election district of the office being sought, are permitted to sign nomination papers.^{xxvi}

The number of valid signatures that must be entered on nomination papers is fixed by a formula in the Pennsylvania Election Code. You are required to gather signatures equal to at least two percent of the largest vote cast for any candidate elected from the same election district for any office (except judge of a court of record), and not less than the amount of signatures required for nomination petitions.^{xxvii}

Don't be intimidated by the 2% requirement. Since the Judge of Election and inspector of Election are attached to the smallest political units (an election district is not supposed to exceed 1,200 registered voters),^{xxviii} the number of signatures required is likely not to be as high as you might think.

Since the number varies from election district to election district, you should contact your County Board of Elections to learn the specific number of signatures you are required to produce on nomination papers if you are seeking to run as an independent or minority party candidate on the November general election ballot.

NOMINATION PETITIONS AND NOMINATION PAPER REQUIREMENTS

It is critical to complete all information on nomination petitions or nomination papers **accurately and legibly**. Entire documents can be invalidated because they are defective in some way.

Here is what must be included on **each** nomination petition and nomination paper (do not get overwhelmed, these documents are pre-printed and most of the information is filled in!):

	Nomination Petitions	Nomination Papers
Required Identification Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of Candidate • Address, Occupation • Political Party • Date of Election • Election Board Position Sought • Election District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of Candidate • Address, Occupation • Political Body^{xxix} • Date of Election • Election Board Position Sought • Election District
Who can sign	Registered voters in the same political party whose nomination the candidate seeks	Any voter, irrespective of political party affiliation
Residence of signers	The same election district as the Election Board	The same election district as the Election Board
Date of Signatures	Signatures dated before February 16 or after March 9 will be struck as invalid	Signatures dated before March 10 or after August 2 will be struck as invalid
Number of Signatures	Judge of Election – At least 10 Inspectors of Election – At least 5	At least two percent of the largest vote cast for any candidate elected from the same geographical area for any office (except judge).
Required Information from Signers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signature • Address^{xxx} • Date of signing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signature • Address^{xxxi} • Date of signing
Required Information from Circulator (Affidavit)*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name, Address • Qualified voter of the election district • Registered with the political party whose nomination the candidate seeks • Affirm that signers knew contents of document • Affirm that signers' addresses are correct • Affirm that signers live in the election district • Affirm that signatures occurred on the date stated • Affirm that signers are qualified voters of the election district and registered with the same political party as party whose nomination the candidate is seeking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name, Address • Qualified voter of the election district • Affirm that signers knew contents of document • Affirm that signers' addresses are correct • Affirm that signers live in the election district • Affirm that signatures occurred on the date stated • Affirm that signers are qualified voters of the election district

Notarization	Circulator must sign an affidavit under oath before a notary public. Each nomination paper must be separately notarized.	Circulator must sign an affidavit under oath before a notary public. Each nomination paper must be separately notarized.
---------------------	--	--

*Each affidavit must be attached to a corresponding signature sheet.^{xxxii}

COLLECTING SIGNATURES

Remember that nomination petitions require the signers to be registered to the same political party as the party whose nomination the candidate is seeking. The easiest method to ensure that people are qualified signers is to canvas from door to door within your election district by looking at "street lists." "Street lists" are lists of every registered voter in an election district by address and party affiliation and can be obtained from your County Board of Elections (see page 14).

CANDIDATE'S AFFIDAVIT

When you are finished collecting all the signatures required for your nomination petitions or nomination papers, they should be bound together with the petition sheets numbered consecutively, beginning with number one, at the foot of each sheet.^{xxxiii} The completed package of signature sheets and circulators' affidavits must be accompanied by a single affidavit signed by the candidate.^{xxxiv} The following must be included in a candidate's affidavit (a pre-printed form):

Nomination Petitions	Nomination Papers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidate's name and address • Election district in which the candidate resides • Office for which the candidate is filing • Party registration^{xxxv} • Affirm that candidate is eligible for the office stated in the petition • Affirm that candidate will not knowingly violate any provision of the Election Code or any other law regulating or limiting election expenses or prohibiting corrupt practices in connection therewith • Affirm that candidate is not a candidate for nomination of any other party for this office • Affirm that the candidate is aware of the requirement that pre- and post-election reports be filed concerning campaign contributions and expenditures ^{xxxvi} • Affirm that they are not a candidate for an office which they already hold, the term for which will not expire in the same year as the office subject to the affidavit.^{xxxvii} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidate's name and address • Election district in which the candidate resides • Office for which the candidate is filing • Affirm that candidate is eligible for the office stated in the petition • Affirm that candidate will not knowingly violate any provision of the Election Code or any other law regulating or limiting election expenses or prohibiting corrupt practices in connection therewith • Affirm that candidate's name has not been presented by any nomination petition as a candidate for any public office voted for in the primary, and that the candidate has not been nominated by any other nomination papers filed for any such office; • Affirm that candidate was not (or will not be) a registered and enrolled member of any political party within thirty days before the primary at which the parties select his or her opponents. • Affirm that they are not a candidate for an office which they already hold, the term for which will not expire in the same year as the office subject to the affidavit.^{xxxviii}

WHERE TO FILE

Nomination petitions and nomination papers for candidates seeking a position as a Judge of Election or Inspectors of Election must be filed with the County Board of Elections. **No filing fees are required.**

Philadelphia County Board of Elections

City Hall, Room 142
Philadelphia, PA 19107
(215) 686-3469
www.philadelphiavotes.com

Bucks County Board of Elections

55 E. Court Street
Doylestown, PA 18901
(215) 348-6154
www.buckscounty.org

Chester County Board of Elections

601 Westtown Road, Suite 150
West Chester, PA 19380
(610) 344-6410
www.chesco.org

Delaware County Board of Elections

201 W. Front Street
Government Center Building
Media, PA 19063
(610) 891-4673
www.co.delaware.pa.us

Montgomery County Board of Elections

One Montgomery Plaza, Suite 602
425 Swede St.
Norristown, PA 19401
(610) 278-3280
www.montcopa.org

For a complete listing of county Boards of Elections across Pennsylvania, visit VotesPA.com.
Remember: All nomination petitions must be filed by March 9, 2021 and all nomination papers must be filed by August 2, 2021.

The **Pennsylvania Department of State** supports the administration of elections. Candidates can also call the Bureau of Elections within the Department of State with questions about how to run for Judge of Election or Inspector of Election.

Pennsylvania Department of State Bureau of Elections, Commissions and Legislation

North Office Building, Room 304
Harrisburg, PA 17120
(717) 787-5280
www.dos.state.pa.us

CHAPTER 4 – AFTER YOU FILE

OBJECTIONS

Nomination petitions and nomination papers are public documents and can be viewed by anyone. Challengers can and will take advantage of this opportunity if they think they can knock you off the ballot because of defects in your documents.

A candidate or any registered voter in the district, regardless of party affiliation, has until seven days after the filing deadline to submit objections to another candidate's nomination petitions or nomination papers.^{xxxix}

Objections to nomination petitions or nomination papers must be filed in two places: **(1)** the county Board of Elections where those documents were originally filed, and **(2)** the court with jurisdiction over the matter. For example, objections to candidates for offices in Philadelphia must be lodged with the Philadelphia Board of Elections and the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas.^{xl}

A court must conduct a hearing on any objections within ten days after the deadline for filing nomination petitions and nomination papers. Rulings must be made within fifteen days after the filing deadline.^{xli} Candidates and objectors must be notified of the hearing and are permitted to appear when it is conducted.^{xlii}

Objections must relate to the statutory requirements previously discussed for nomination petitions and nomination papers: whether the signers were registered voters within the election district, enrolled in the proper party (for nomination petitions), and personally signed and dated the documents. If the court decides to strike signatures as invalid, leaving an insufficient number of valid signatures, or finds that blank petitions were circulated for signatures, the nomination petitions or nomination papers being challenged will be set aside and that candidate's name will be removed from the ballot.^{xliii}

BALLOT POSITION

If you are the only candidate on the ballot for Judge of Election or Inspectors of Elections, you can skip this section altogether.

Where more than one candidate is seeking a position, they must draw for ballot positions. This drawing occurs shortly after the filing deadline for nomination petitions or nomination papers and is held at the local Board of Elections. Many observers believe there is an advantage to a high ballot position. For that reason, each candidate must be notified of and represented at the drawing to protect his or her right to a fair draw. Candidates can attend in person or be represented by an agent duly authorized by a letter of attorney. If you do not attend, a staff member of the local County Board of Elections will draw for you.^{xliv}

Following the drawing, official ballots must be printed no later than the Thursday before the election and specimen ballots must be made available for public inspection at the county Board of Elections and on their website.^{xlv} These sample ballots show the candidates for each office and their respective ballot positions.

On the last Thursday before a primary election, each candidate is entitled to receive (upon request) three free sample ballots for his or her election district.^{xlvi} On the last Thursday before the November municipal election, the county political party chairman or another authorized representative of a political party is entitled to receive (upon request) two free sample ballots for each election district.^{xlvii} Sample ballots should be picked up promptly and checked for accuracy so that any deficiencies can be corrected before the following Tuesday's election.

CAMPAIGNING

Once you are on the ballot, it is entirely up to you to decide how much you want to campaign – if at all. Many people enjoy campaigning for the same reason they like serving on an Election Board: they get a chance to meet their neighbors and become involved in the political process.

Candidates who spend \$250 or more for their campaign must submit timely statements and reports to comply with Pennsylvania's campaign finance law. Visit the PA Department of State's website at www.dos.pa.gov for filing deadlines, FAQs and copies of the reporting forms. And remember that any flyers, cards, signs or other materials used to influence voters must state clearly who paid for them!

CONCLUSION

We hope you find the information contained in this guide to be both informative and useful. To learn more, join an online community of current and aspiring poll workers, find **The Poll Worker Caucus Facebook Group**. The group is a terrific space to pose questions, share tips and exchange ideas with other experienced poll workers. The Committee of Seventy also provides additional resources and training opportunities for poll workers at wevote.seventy.org.

We also hope you will be convinced that running to become a Judge of Election or Inspectors of Election is worth serious consideration. You may find this is the beginning of a long career in the political arena. Or you may decide that working at the polling place satisfies your interest in community participation.

Whatever you decide, we wish you luck. Please feel free contact us if you have any questions along the way.

Committee of Seventy
123 South Broad Street, Suite 1800
Philadelphia, PA 19109
(215) 557-3600
www.seventy.org

Special thanks to law interns Marissa Parker, Temple University Beasley School of Law Class of 2007, Cassandra Belter, Villanova University School of Law Class of 2008, John Fuller, Villanova University School of Law Class of 2009, and Kevin Walker, Drexel University Earle Mack School of Law Class of 2010, for helping to revise and expand this publication. Committee of Seventy staff Molly Morrill and Ellen Kaplan supervised its production. The 2021 edition was updated by Policy Director Patrick Christmas.

ⁱ Election districts are the smallest political units in a city, borough or township. Each election district should contain no fewer than 100 and no more than 1,200 registered voters. See 25 Pennsylvania Statutes (P.S.) § 2701, 2702.

ⁱⁱ See 25 P.S. § 2676.

ⁱⁱⁱ See 25 P.S. § 2677.

^{iv} See 25 P.S. § 2678.

^v See 25 P.S. § 2679.

^{vi} See 25 P.S. § 2674 and § 2672(b) for specific provisions on appointing students to serve as Clerk. A student may not serve as a Judge of Election or Majority or Minority Inspector. 25 P.S. § 2672(b)(6).

^{vii} See 25 P.S. § 2680.

^{viii} See 25 P.S. § 2674 and § 2672(b) for specific provisions on appointing students to serve as Machine Inspector. A student may not serve as a Judge of Election or Majority or Minority Inspector. 25 P.S. § 2672(b)(6).

^{ix} See 25 P.S. §§ 2677, 2678, 2679, 2680.

^x See 25 P.S. §2674: Clerks of election, machine inspectors

^{xi} Elections in every county in Pennsylvania are run by a county Board of Elections. County Boards of Election in all counties except Philadelphia are overseen by the county Commissioners. Philadelphia’s elections are overseen by three City Commissioners. See 25 P.S. § 2641.

^{xii} See 25 P.S. §§ 2672, 2674.

^{xiii} When we talk about bi-partisanship, we are referring to the need for representatives of the major political parties—Democrats and Republicans—on an Election Board. There are also minor political parties in Pennsylvania, such as the Green Party and the Libertarian Party. Candidates from minor political parties are permitted to run for, and serve as, members of an Election Board.

^{xiv} 25 P.S. §§ 2674, 2675.

^{xv} See 25 P.S. § 2684: Instruction of election officers in voting machine districts; unqualified officers not to serve. (This requirement does not pertain to a Judge of Election, Majority Inspector, Minority Inspector or Machine Inspector appointed to fill a vacancy that arises on the day before, or on the day of, an election.)

^{xvi} See 25 P.S. § 2682.2(a).

^{xvii} See 25 P.S. § 2682.2(i).

^{xviii} See 25 P.S. § 2683.

^{xix} See 25 P.S. §§ 2911(e)(6), 2911.1.

^{xx} See 25 P.S. § 3155.

^{xxi} See 25 P.S. § 2867.

^{xxii} See 25 P.S. § 2911(a).

^{xxiii} Although section 2913(c) of the Pennsylvania Statute provides: “All nomination papers must be filed on or before the second Friday subsequent to the primary,” the deadline for nomination papers has been extended to August 1 or the Monday immediately following August 1st when it falls on a Saturday or Sunday. This date is not contained in the Election Code, it comes from two consent decrees signed by the Secretary of the Commonwealth. *Hall v. Davis*, No. 84-1057 (E.D. Pa. 1984) and *Libertarian Party of Pennsylvania v. Davis*, No. 84-0262 (M.D. Pa. 1984).

^{xxiv} See 25 P.S. § 2868, 2911(c).

^{xxv} See 25 P.S. § 2868.

^{xxvi} See 25 P.S. § 2911(c).

^{xxvii} See 25 P.S. § 2911(b); *see also Moore v. Osser*, 233 A.2d 579 (Pa. 1967) (holding that number of qualified electors of the electoral district signing nomination papers had to be at least equal to two percent of the largest entire vote cast for any officer elected at the most recent election in the district where the nomination papers are filed).

^{xxviii} See 25 P.S. § 2702.

^{xxix} See 25 P.S. § 2912. All nomination papers must designate a name for the political body, not to exceed three words, which will appear on the November ballot. The Election Code prohibits political bodies from adopting a name deceptively similar to any other party or body. Many political bodies designate themselves by the name of their candidates (for example, "Smith for Mayor" or "Citizens for Jones"). Nomination papers must also name three to five registered voters as the "committee" of the organization. These persons are empowered to fill vacancies in the slate of the political body in the event that a vacancy occurs before the final election.

^{xxx} See 25 P.S. § 2868.

^{xxxi} See 25 P.S. § 2911(c).

^{xxxii} See 25 P.S. §§ 2869, 2911(d).

^{xxxiii} See 25 P.S. §§ 2869, 2911(d).

^{xxxiv} See 25 P.S. §§ 2870, 2911(e).

^{xxxv} See 25 P.S. § 2872.2(b)(1).

^{xxxvi} Candidates for elected positions on an Elected Board are responsible for filing campaign finance reports if their contributions or expenditures exceed \$250. Learn more about Pennsylvania's campaign finance law at www.dos.pa.gov or contact your local County Board of Election.

^{xxxvii} See 25 P.S. § 2870.

^{xxxviii} See 25 P.S. § 2911(e).

^{xxxix} See 25 P.S. § 2937.

^{xl} See 25 P.S. § 2937.

^{xli} *Id.*

^{xlii} *Id.*

^{xliii} See 25 P.S. §§ 2936, 2937.

^{xliv} See 25 P.S. § 2875.

^{xlv} See 25 P.S. § 2968(a).

^{xlvi} See 25 P.S. § 2968(b).

^{xlvii} See 25 P.S. § 2968(c).