



2026 Garfield County Candidate Information Guide



Garfield County Clerk and Recorder's Office
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FROM THE CLERK'S DESK

Congratulations on your quest for candidacy for a Garfield County elected position.

Running for public office is one of the most challenging and rewarding endeavors in our democracy.

This guide is a resource for individuals seeking election to Garfield County offices, including Assessor, Clerk and Recorder, County Commissioner, Coroner, Sheriff, and Treasurer.

Please note that our election office does not oversee ballot access for federal, state, municipal, special district or school district elections.

It is the sole responsibility of the candidate and the committee to understand and comply with all applicable state or local laws, statutes, ordinances, rules, regulations and policies to run for or be elected to office.

If you have any questions after reviewing this guide, please feel free to contact myself or the election team at elections@garfieldcountyco.gov.

Best Regards,

Jacklyn K. Harmon

Garfield County Clerk and Recorder

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Notice

This guide was created for reference and training purposes only and should not be used as a substitute for legal advice. It is the candidate’s responsibility to obtain the actual knowledge of how to access the ballot as well as the campaign laws and regulations.

The statutes referenced in this document are from the Colorado Revised Statutes 2024 (C.R.S.).

Refer to the last page of this guide for a list of important links and resources.

DEFINITION OF A CANDIDATE

According to Article XXVIII, Section 2 (2) of the Colorado Constitution:

"Candidate" means any person who seeks nomination or election to any state or local public office that is to be voted on in this state at any primary election, general election, school district election, special district election, or municipal election. "Candidate" also includes a judge or justice of any court of record who seeks to be retained in office pursuant to the provisions of section 25 of article VI. A person is a candidate for election if the person has publicly announced an intention to seek election to public office or retention of a judicial office and thereafter has received a contribution or made an expenditure in support of the candidacy. A person remains a candidate for purposes of this article so long as the candidate maintains a registered candidate committee. A person who maintains a candidate committee after an election cycle, but who has not publicly announced an intention to seek election to public office in the next or any subsequent election cycle, is a candidate for purposes of this article.

STEPS FOR CANDIDACY

The following are recommended steps to become a candidate for elected office in Garfield County Government. The elected offices are (in ballot order): Commissioner, Clerk and Recorder, Treasurer, Assessor, Sheriff, Surveyor and Coroner. It is the responsibility of the candidate to obtain the knowledge and understand the process of running for office.

Step 1: Review the candidate requirements, responsibilities and duties of county elected offices in the Colorado Constitution (Articles XIV and XXVIII) and Colorado Revised Statutes (Titles 1 and 30) and ensure you meet the qualifications. The Colorado Constitution and Colorado Revised Statutes can be found online at www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/Colorado/. A summary of the qualifications for each office can be found on subsequent pages. You will be required to swear and affirm by oath that you meet the qualifications for a county elected office in a Candidate Affidavit (see step 3).

Step 2: Review your voter registration at www.GoVoteColorado.gov to ensure that you are registered to vote and qualified to run for office, including your voter registration date, party affiliation and affiliation date.

Step 3: Complete a Candidate Affidavit Form within 10 days of becoming a candidate, the form must be notarized by a Notary Public and filed with the Colorado Secretary of State's office. You become a candidate when you publicly announce your intent to run for office and thereafter receive a contribution or make an expenditure in support of your candidacy. For additional questions, contact the Secretary of State at 303-894-2200 option #3.

Step 4: You must register a Candidate Committee with the Secretary of State at <https://tracer.sos.colorado.gov/PublicSite/homepage.aspx> before receiving any contributions. Familiarize yourself with Colorado Campaign Finance rules and laws, as well as the Secretary of State TRACER system for all campaign finance disclosure reports and committee registration using the following resources:

- Colorado Campaign and Political Finance Manual published by the Colorado Secretary of State, available online at <https://tracer.sos.colorado.gov/PublicSite/homepage.aspx>. Be prepared to register a candidate committee and submit your campaign finance disclosure reports within the timeframes allotted by Colorado law. Failure to file on-time can result in monetary penalties.
- Colorado Constitution Article XXVIII (Campaign and Political Finance) and XIV (Counties)
- Colorado Revised Statutes Title I, Article 45 (Fair Campaign Practices Act) and Article 4 (Elections- Access to Ballot by Candidates)
- Additional election resources available at <https://www.coloradosos.gov/pubs/elections/main.html>.

REQUIREMENTS FOR COUNTY OFFICES

The guide below provides a general overview of candidate qualifications for County elected offices and should be used for reference only. Please review the Colorado Constitution and Colorado Revised Statutes for current applicable laws. No person is eligible to be a candidate for more than one office at a time, except for special district boards.

Note: The offices below are listed in the order they appear on the ballot.

County Commissioner

Number of County Commissioner Seats

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 6, 1-4-205(3) C.R.S.]

Garfield County has three (3) Commissioner seats

- Commissioner District 1 will expire in January 2027. This seat will be on the ballot in November 2026.
- Commissioner Districts 2 and 3 will expire in January 2029. These seats will be on the ballot in November 2028.

Commissioners are voted on at large by all eligible Garfield County voters.

Term of Office

Four (4) years

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 6; 1-4-205(1)(a) C.R.S.]

Minimum Age Requirement

18 years

[1-4-501(1) C.R.S.]

Residency Requirement

Registered elector and resident of the commissioner district for which they are running for at least one (1) year prior to the election

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 10; 1-4-205(1)(b) C.R.S.]

Citizenship

U.S. Citizen

[1-4-501(1) C.R.S.]

County Clerk and Recorder

Term of Office

Four (4) years

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 8; 1-4-206 C.R.S.; 30-10-401(1) C.R.S.]

Residency Requirement

Registered elector and resident of the county for at least one (1) year prior to the election

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 10]

Minimum Age Requirement

18 years

[1-4-501(1) C.R.S.]

Citizenship

U.S. Citizen

[1-4-501(1) C.R.S.]

County Treasurer

Term of Office

Four (4) years

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 8; 1-4-206 C.R.S.; 30-10-701(1) C.R.S.]

Residency Requirement

Registered elector and resident of the county for at least one (1) year prior to the election

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 10]

Minimum Age Requirement

18 years

[1-4-501(1) C.R.S.]

Citizenship

U.S. Citizen

[1-4-501(1) C.R.S.]

County Assessor

Term of Office

Four (4) years

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 8; 1-4-206 C.R.S.; 30-10-801(1) C.R.S.]

Residency Requirement

Registered elector and resident of the county for at least one (1) year prior to the election

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 10]

Minimum Age Requirement

18 years

[1-4-501(1) C.R.S.]

Citizenship

U.S. Citizen

[1-4-501(1) C.R.S.]

County Sheriff

Term of Office

Four (4) years

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 8; 1-4-206 C.R.S.; 30-10-501(1) C.R.S.]

Minimum Age Requirement

18 years

[1-4-501(1) C.R.S.]

Residency Requirement

Registered elector and resident of the county for at least one (1) year prior to the election

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 10]

Citizenship

U.S. Citizen

[1-4-501(1)(a) C.R.S.; 30-10-501.5(1)(a) C.R.S.]

Education Requirement

Possess a high school diploma or its equivalent or a college degree

[30-10-501.5(1)(b) C.R.S.]

Other Requirements

- Complete set of fingerprints taken by a qualified law enforcement agency and submit a receipt evidencing such fingerprinting at the time of filing his or her written acceptance form or write-in affidavit with the County Clerk.
[30-10-501.5(1)(c) C.R.S.]
- A person who has been convicted of or pleaded guilty or entered a plea of nolo contendere to any felony charge under federal or state law is unqualified for the office of sheriff unless pardoned.
[30-10-501.5(1)(c) C.R.S.]

County Surveyor

Term of Office

Four (4) years

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 8; 1-4-206 C.R.S.; 30-10-901(1) C.R.S.]

Minimum Age Requirement

18 years

[1-4-501(1) C.R.S.]

Residency Requirement

Registered elector and resident of the county for at least one (1) year prior to the election

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 10]

Citizenship

U.S. Citizen

[1-4-501(1) C.R.S.]

Other Requirements

- Professional land surveyor
[12-120-3 C.R.S.; 30-10-901(1) C.R.S.]

County Coroner

Term of Office

Four (4) years

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 8; 1-4-206 C.R.S.; 30-10-601 C.R.S.]

Minimum Age Requirement

18 years

[1-4-501(1) C.R.S.]

Residency Requirement

Registered elector and resident of the county for at least one (1) year prior to the election

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 10]

Citizenship

U.S. Citizen

[1-2-101(1) C.R.S.; 30-10-601.5(1)(a) C.R.S.]

Education Requirement

Possess a high school diploma or its equivalent or a college degree

[30-10-601.5(1)(b) C.R.S.]

Other Requirements

- Complete set of fingerprints taken by a qualified law enforcement agency and submit a receipt evidencing such fingerprinting at the time of filing his or her written acceptance form or write-in affidavit with the County Clerk
[30-10-601.5(2) C.R.S.]
- A person who has been convicted of or pleaded guilty or entered a plea of nolo contendere to any felony charge under federal or state law is unqualified for the office of sheriff unless pardoned
[30-10-601.5(3) C.R.S.]

BECOMING A CANDIDATE

There are three ways for a candidate to access the ballot (i.e. get their name on the ballot): designation by party assembly, nomination by petition, or the write-in process. These processes are briefly described below. For detailed information, please see Colorado Revised Statutes Title 1, Article 4 on Access to the Ballot by Candidates at www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/Colorado/.

Designation by Party Assembly

Major and minor party candidates may seek nomination to office at their political party's assembly, which is held no later than 21 days after the precinct caucus. Candidates who want to be a part of this process should contact their political party for assembly protocol, dates and rules. Refer to the last page of this guide for party contact information.

At the assembly, the party delegates vote on the candidates. The candidate must be registered as affiliated with that political party, as shown in the statewide voter registration system, no later than the first business day of the January immediately preceding the election for which they are seeking nomination (unless party rules state otherwise).

Major party candidates nominated by assembly are placed on the primary election ballot.

Minor party candidates nominated by assembly are placed on the general election ballot unless there is more than one candidate for that office nominated by assembly and/or petition; then the candidates are placed on the primary election ballot.

If you receive your party's nomination, a Certificate of Designation by Assembly must be filed by the political party with the office of the Clerk and Recorder no later than four (4) days after the adjournment of the assembly. Certificates of Designation may be transmitted electronically; however, the original certificate must also be filed and postmarked no later than ten (10) days after the adjournment of the assembly. Section 1-4-601, 1-4-604 and 1-4-1304 C.R.S.

Each candidate designated by assembly must file a Candidate Acceptance of Designation form with the office of the Clerk and Recorder within four (4) days of adjournment of the assembly. The acceptance form is provided to the candidate by the party and may be transmitted electronically; however, the original acceptance must also be filed and postmarked no later than ten (10) days after the adjournment of the assembly. Section 1-4-601 and 1-4-1304 C.R.S.

Nomination by Petition

The petition process involves circulating a written petition to eligible registered electors to obtain their signature in support of your candidacy. For more information, refer to Colorado Revised Statutes Title 1 Article 4, Part 8 on Nomination of Candidates by Petition.

Affiliated candidates (major or minor party) may use the petition option in addition to or as an alternative to the assembly process. However, a candidate may *not* petition onto the ballot if they have attempted and failed to receive at least 10% of the votes for nomination for the same office at their party's assembly. Affiliated candidates seeking nomination by petition must be affiliated with the political party, as shown in the statewide voter registration system, no later than the first business day of the January immediately preceding the election for which they are seeking nomination.

Unaffiliated candidates must get on the ballot through the petition process. Unaffiliated candidates nominated by petition are placed directly on the general election ballot; there is no primary election for unaffiliated candidates. Unaffiliated candidates must be registered as unaffiliated, as shown in the statewide voter registration system, no later than the first business day of the January immediately preceding the election for which they are seeking nomination.

The Clerk and Recorder must approve all petition formats for county offices prior to circulation. Section 1-4-903 C.R.S. Each petition may contain only one candidate's name. The Clerk and Recorder's office will verify signatures and notify the candidate of sufficiency or insufficiency. For more information about the candidate petition process, please email elections@garfieldcountyco.gov to make an appointment with the Clerk and Recorder.

Signature requirements for major party candidate petitions

Major party candidates seeking to be placed on the primary election ballot by petition

Major party candidates for Garfield County offices require petition signatures equal to the lesser of 1,000 signers or signers equal in number to 10% of the votes cast in the prior primary election for the office, or if no primary was held, 10% of the votes cast in the prior general election for the office. Section 1-4-801(2)(a), C.R.S. The number of signatures required for a 2026 petition for a major party candidate is based on the cast vote totals from the 2022 Primary Election or the 2022 General Election.

Eligible electors signing a petition for a major political party candidate must be affiliated with that party for at least 22 days before signing.

An unaffiliated voter is not eligible to sign a petition for a candidate of a major political party.

The table below indicates the number of signatures required, per office and by party, for major party candidate petitions for the 2026 Primary Election.

Note: The offices below are listed in the order they appear on the ballot.

County Office	Republican	Democratic
Commissioner District 1	629	408
Clerk and Recorder	611	404
Treasurer	604	403
Assessor	625	1000
Sheriff	634	1000
Surveyor	605	1000
Coroner	620	1000

Signature requirements for minor party or unaffiliated candidate petitions

Minor party or unaffiliated candidates seeking to be placed on the general election ballot by petition

A minor party candidate will only be placed on a primary ballot if the minor party is conducting a primary election. Otherwise, a minor party candidate nominated by petition will have their name placed on the general election ballot.

Unaffiliated candidates nominated by petition will always be placed on the general election ballot.

Minor party or unaffiliated candidates for Garfield County offices seeking to be placed on the primary election (if applicable) or general election ballot by petition require signatures equal to the lesser of 1,000 signatures or signers equal in number to 2% of the votes cast for all candidates for that office in the most recent general election. Section 1-4-802 (c) (VII), C.R.S.

The number of signatures required for a 2026 petition for a minor party or unaffiliated candidate is based on the cast vote totals from the 2022 General Election.

The table on the next page indicates the number of signatures required per office for minor party or unaffiliated candidate petitions for the 2026 General Election.

Note: The offices below are listed in the order they appear on the ballot.

County Office	
Commissioner District 1	484
Clerk and Recorder	474
Treasurer	474
Assessor	327
Sheriff	309
Surveyor	320
Coroner	329

Requirements for Petition Signers

The following are the requirements for signers on a petition to nominate candidates from a major political party. Section 1-4-904 (1) and 1-4-904 (2) (a).

- Must be an eligible elector.
- Must be affiliated with the major political party named in the petition for at least 22 days as shown in the statewide voter registration system.
- Has not signed any other petition for any other candidate for the same office.

The following are the requirements for signers on a petition to nominate candidates from a minor political party or unaffiliated candidates. Section 1-4-904 (1) and 1-4-904 (2) (b).

- Must be an eligible elector.
- Has not signed any other petition for any other candidate for the same office.
- Party affiliation is not relevant.

Requirements for Petition Circulators

The following are requirements for all petition circulators, regardless of the candidate's party affiliation. Section 1-4-905 (1) and 1-4-905 (6) (a) and 1-4-905 (6) (b), C.R.S.

- Citizen of the United States.
- At least 18 years of age at the time the petition is circulated.
- Must wear an identification badge that states either "Volunteer Circulator" or "Paid Circulator."

Any candidate wanting to circulate a petition to gain access to the primary or general election ballot must schedule a meeting with the Clerk and Recorder to receive petition format approval prior to circulating any petition. Please email elections@garfieldcountyco.gov to schedule a meeting.

Write-In Designation

A write-in candidate is a candidate whose name does not appear on the ballot, but for whom voters may vote nonetheless by writing in the person's name. Any person who wishes to be a write-in candidate must file an Affidavit of Intent for Write-In Designation with the office of the Clerk and Recorder by the close of business on the 67th day before a primary election or by the close of business on the 110th day before any other election. Sections 1-4-1101 and 1-4-1102, C.R.S.

WITHDRAWAL PROCESS

If you wish to withdraw your candidacy, the correct procedure depends upon your status on the ballot. Section 1-4-1001 C.R.S.

- A candidate who has accepted a designation or nomination may withdraw from candidacy at any time by filing a signed and notarized **Statement of Withdrawal by Candidate** form with the office of the Clerk and Recorder.
- If the form is not filed in time for your name to be taken off the ballot, the election will proceed, and any votes cast for you will be deemed invalid and will not be counted.
- If you are a candidate but have not yet been designated or nominated to the ballot and wish to withdraw your candidacy, you must submit a signed letter of withdrawal to the office of the Clerk and Recorder.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Where do I file my candidate paperwork for County office?

Depending on how you gain access to the ballot, you will need to file certain candidate paperwork with the office of the Clerk and Recorder. You can email all applicable forms to elections@garfieldcountyco.gov. You must also submit the original copies of each document, which can be dropped off at or mailed to 109 8th Street, Suite 200, Glenwood Springs, CO 81601.

The following are examples of the various candidate paperwork which needs filed with the Clerk and Recorder.

- Candidate Acceptance of Designation (form provided by the political party at the assembly)
- Candidate Acceptance of Petition Nomination
- Affidavit of Intent for Write-In Designation
- Certificate of Designation by Assembly (filed by the political party after adjournment of the assembly)

The following forms will need to be filed electronically with the Secretary of State at <https://tracer.sos.colorado.gov>.

- Candidate Affidavit
- Campaign Finance Forms
- Committee Registration

Where can I find candidate, campaign and election dates and deadlines?

Refer to the 2026 election calendar (once published) on the Secretary of State's website for important dates relating to your candidacy. Visit www.coloradosos.gov, click on 'Elections & Voting,' then 'Election Information.' This calendar does occasionally get updated, so be sure to check for the most up to date version.

What do I have to do regarding campaign finance? When do I file my campaign finance paperwork?

Refer to the filing calendar at www.coloradosos.gov. Click on 'Elections & Voting,' then Campaign Finance.

How do I verify my status and affiliation as a registered voter?

You may review your voter registration www.GoVoteColorado.gov. Click on 'Find my registration.'

Can I request a list of Garfield County voters?

Yes, basic information in a voter record is considered public record. You can request a list of all Garfield County registered voters (or subsets of) by emailing elections@garfieldcountyco.gov. You will be sent a request form to fill out and return to us, along with payment. All reports are \$40.00 each.

How can I find out who the other candidates are?

You can visit the Secretary of State website at <https://tracer.sos.colorado.gov> and then go to 'Search Database' and 'Candidate Search.' This option allows you to search by several different options.

Where and when can I find the election results?

Election results are posted on the Garfield County website (www.garfieldcountyco.gov). The first unofficial results will be posted shortly after the polls close at 7 pm on election night and will be updated throughout the evening. If there are still ballots to be processed on the Wednesday following the election, the results will be updated again before the close of business on Wednesday. Official results are posted after completion of the risk limiting audit and once the canvass board certifies the election results (approximately 3 weeks after election day).

POLITICAL PARTY CONTACT INFORMATION

Garfield Democratic Party

PO Box 2637

Glenwood Springs, CO 81602

Email: garfieldcountymocrats@gmail.com

Web: www.info@garcodems.org

Garfield Republican Party

PO Box 2593

Glenwood Springs, CO 81602

Email: garfieldcountyrepublicans@gmail.com

Web: www.garfieldcountyrepublicans.com

Colorado Democratic Party

789 Sherman St., Suite 110

Denver, CO 80203

Phone: 303-623-4762

Fax: 303-623-2443

Web: www.coloradodems.org

Colorado Republican Party

5950 S. Willow Drive, Suite 210

Greenwood Village, CO 80111

Phone: 303-758-3333

Fax: 303-753-4611

Web: www.cologop.org

USEFUL LINKS AND RESOURCES

Secretary of State's Office Home page

www.coloradosos.gov

Campaign Finance Home Page

<https://www.coloradosos.gov/pubs/elections/CampaignFinance/home.html>

Secretary of State's Elections Division Home Page

<https://www.coloradosos.gov/pubs/elections/>

Secretary of State's Election Calendar

<https://www.coloradosos.gov/pubs/elections/Resources/ElectionCalendars.html>

TRACER Campaign Finance Disclosure Site

<https://tracer.sos.colorado.gov/PublicSite/homepage.aspx>

Campaign Finance Filing Calendars

<https://www.coloradosos.gov/pubs/elections/CampaignFinance/filingCalendar.html>

Campaign Finance Training Courses and Online Classes

<https://www.coloradosos.gov/pubs/elections/CampaignFinance/training.html>

Election Laws, Rules and Resources (Colorado Constitution, Colorado Revised Statutes, election rules and other resources)

<https://www.coloradosos.gov/pubs/elections/lawsRulesResources.html>

Garfield County Home Page

<https://www.garfieldcountyco.gov/>