Filing for Office: U.S. Senator

Michigan Election Law governs the ballot access procedures for candidates seeking the office of U.S. Senator. As these procedures are subject to change by the state Legislature, candidates interested in participating in Michigan's August Primary Election or November General Election are encouraged to consult our website, Michigan.gov/Elections, for updates.

General requirements

Certain requirements of Michigan Election Law and federal law are applicable to all candidates seeking the office of U.S. Senator, regardless of political party affiliation.

Office qualifications: To be eligible for the office of U.S. Senator, a person must be a citizen of the United States for nine years, at least 30 years of age and, when elected, an inhabitant of the state of Michigan (US Const, art I, § 3).

Affidavit of Identity: Except for write-in candidates, all candidates for U.S. Senator must submit an Affidavit of Identity in duplicate when filing for office (MCL 168.558). Affidavit of Identity forms can be obtained through any county clerk's office or from the Bureau of Elections (BOE). The Affidavit of Identity form is also available on BOE's website under "Ballot Access."

Candidates who fail to comply with the Affidavit of Identity filing requirement are ineligible to appear on the ballot.

Campaign finance reports: U.S. Senate candidates are required to comply with the campaign finance disclosure requirements provided under federal law. For further information, contact the Federal Election Commission, 1050 First Street NE Washington, D.C. 20463. Toll free line: (800) 424-9530. FEC.gov

Additionally, Michigan Election Law requires any candidate running for U.S. Senate and filing an Affidavit of Identity to state on the form that on the date the affidavit was executed, all statements, reports, late filing fees, and fines required of the candidate, or any candidate committee organized under the Campaign Finance Act to support the candidate's election, have been paid or filed. **Candidates that have any outstanding notices of Failure to File or outstanding late filing fees with any filing official in the State are ineligible to appear on the ballot** (MCL 168.558).

Major party candidates

Michigan's August Primary is limited to eligible candidates who affiliate with the Democratic Party or the Republican Party. (In order for a party to be eligible to participate in the August Primary, the party's principal candidate must have received at least 5% on the total number of votes cast for the office of Secretary of State in the last preceding state election. A party's principal candidate is the candidate whose name appears nearest the top of the party column. See MCL 168.532).

Filing requirements: A candidate seeking the Democratic Party or Republican Party nomination to the office of U.S. Senator must file an Affidavit of Identity in duplicate and partisan nominating petitions no later than 4 p.m. on the 15th Tuesday before the August Primary. **Please see the chart at the end of the document for the current election cycle filing deadlines.**

Such candidates will appear on the August Primary Election ballot; the winning nominees will appear on the November General Election ballot.

Withdrawal: The deadline to withdraw a candidate filing for party nomination is 4 p.m. on the third day after the filing deadline (MCL 168.94). The withdrawal must be in writing and must be filed with BOE.

Petition requirements: All petitions used by candidates must be in the form required under Michigan Election Law. Sample petition forms can be obtained through BOE or any county clerk's office. Petition sheets may be purchased from commercial suppliers that produce election materials.

Candidates seeking the Democratic Party or Republican Party nomination must use the **Countywide Partisan Nominating Petition form**. A candidate must submit at least **15,000** valid signatures and may submit up to **30,000** signatures. The petition must be signed by at least 100 registered electors in each of at least half of the congressional districts in the state. Access to the ballot via filing fee is **not** available (MCL 168.93; 544f).

Minor party candidates

In addition to the Democratic and Republican parties, other political parties are qualified[1] to appear on Michigan's November General Election ballot. (In order for a party to be qualified to appear on the General Election ballot, *any one* of the party's candidates whose names appeared in the party's column on the last preceding General Election ballot had to have received at least 1% of the total number of votes cast for the winning candidate for the office of Secretary of State in the previous election at which a Secretary of State was elected. See MCL 168.560a.

[1] The minor political parties currently qualified to appear on the November General Election ballot are: Libertarian, US Taxpayers, Green, Natural Law, and Working Class parties.

Convention deadline: A candidate seeking the office of U.S. Senator as a minor party candidate must receive nomination to the office at the party's nominating convention. The party's convention must be held no later than the August Primary (MCL 168.686a).

Within one business day after the conclusion of the nominating convention, party officials must submit a Certificate of Nomination to document the individual's nomination to the office, an Affidavit of Identity in duplicate completed by the candidate, and a Certificate of Acceptance completed by the candidate. The Certificate of Acceptance form is available on BOE's website under "Ballot Access."

Withdrawal: Candidates nominated and certified via convention are not permitted to withdraw (MCL 168.686a(4)).

Candidates without political party affiliation

Candidates seeking the office of U.S. Senator may do so without political party affiliation. These candidates are only eligible to appear on the November General Election ballot and will be listed as "No Party Affiliation."

Filing requirements: A candidate without political party affiliation seeking the office of U.S. Senator must file an Affidavit of Identity in duplicate and qualifying petitions no later than 4 p.m. on the 110th day before Election Day (MCL 168.590c(2)). **Please see the chart at the end of the document for the current election cycle filing deadlines.**

Withdrawal: The deadline to withdraw for a candidate without party affiliation is 4 p.m. on the third day after the filing deadline. The withdrawal must be in writing and must be filed with BOE. MCL 168.590c.

Petition requirements: All petitions used by candidates must be in the form required under Michigan Election Law. Sample petition forms can be obtained through the BOE or any county clerk's office. Forms may be purchased from commercial suppliers that produce election materials.

Candidates seeking nomination without political party affiliation must use the **Countywide Qualifying Petition** form. A candidate must submit at least **12,000**[2] valid signatures and may submit up to **60,000** signatures. The petition must be signed by at least 100 registered electors in each of at least half of the congressional districts in the state (MCL 168.590b(4)); 544f.

All signatures submitted on a qualifying petition must have been collected within the preceding 180-day period; signatures which are dated more than 180 days prior to the date the petition is filed are invalid (MCL 168.590b(3)).

[2] In *Graveline v Benson*, 430 FSupp 3d 297 (ED Mich 2019), the number of signatures required for non-affiliated candidates seeking statewide office was reduced from 30,000 to 12,000.

Write-in candidates

Filing requirements: A candidate seeking the office of U.S. Senator with write-in votes must file a Declaration of Intent with BOE no later than 4 p.m. on the second Friday immediately before the election (MCL 168.737a). **Please see the chart at the end of the document for the current election cycle filing deadlines.**

The Declaration of Intent form is available on BOE's website under "Ballot Access."

Filing official

All filings for the office of U.S. Senator must be submitted to BOE at the following address:

Michigan Department of State
Bureau of Elections
Richard H. Austin Building – 1st Floor
430 West Allegan St
Lansing, Michigan 48933

Phone: 800-292-5973
Fax: 517-335-3235
Email:MDOS-File-Canvass@Michigan.gov

2026 Election Dates

Primary Election	Tuesday, Aug. 4, 2026
General Election	Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2026

Category	Filing method	Signatures needed	Filing location	Filing deadline	Withdrawal deadline
Major party candidates	Partisan nominating	15,000 – 30,000	BOE	4/21/2026 4 p.m.	4/24/2026 4 p.m.
Minor party candidates	Convention	N/A	BOE	1 business day after convention	N/A
No party affiliation	Qualifying petitions	12,000[3] – 60,000	BOE	7/16/2026 4 p.m.	7/20/2026 4 p.m.
Write-in candidates	Write-In Declaration	N/A	BOE	Primary: 7/24/2026 4 p.m. General: 10/23/2026 4 p.m.	N/A

[3] In *Graveline v Benson*, 430 FSupp 3d 297 (ED Mich 2019), the minimum number of signatures required for non-affiliated candidates seeking statewide office was reduced from 30,000 to 12,000. The maximum number remains 60,000 as specified in MCL 168.544f.