Filing Requirements: State Senator

Michigan Election Law governs the ballot access procedures for candidates seeking the office of state 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 should visit Michigan.gov/Elections, for the latest updates.

General requirements

Certain requirements of Michigan Election Law are applicable to all candidates seeking the office of state senator regardless of political party affiliation.

Office eligibility: To be eligible for the office of state senator a person must be a citizen of the United States, at least 21 years of age, and a registered and qualified elector of the district they wish to represent by the filing deadline. Const 1963, art 4 §7; MCL 168.161.

Affidavit of Identity: Except for write-in candidates, all candidates for state senator must submit an Affidavit of Identity in duplicate when filing for office. 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." MCL 168.558.

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

Campaign finance reports: State and local candidates are required to comply with the financial disclosure requirements provided under the Michigan Campaign Finance Act, PA 388 of 1976.

An individual becomes a candidate under the Michigan Campaign Finance Act as soon as the individual does one of the following:

- Files an affidavit, fee, or nominating petition **OR**
- Is certified as the nominee of their political party **OR**
- Receives a contribution (**includes contributions from the candidate's own personal funds**), makes an expenditure, or authorizes someone else to do so on their behalf **OR**
- Is the subject of a recall vote **OR**
- Was elected to an elective office and can seek re-election.

Once any of the conditions above is met, a candidate has:

- 10 days to form a Candidate Committee
- 10 additional days to file the Statement of Organization online

- **Example: On May 1, 2026, an individual is nominated at their political party convention for the Office of Governor. The formation date of their Candidate Committee can be no later than May 11, 2026, and the Statement of Organization is due to BOE on or before May 21, 2026.**

Michigan Election Law requires any candidate 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 to support the candidate's election under Michigan's Campaign Finance Act have been filed or paid. **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.

Personal financial disclosure: Certain state public office holders and candidates are required to comply with the Public Officers Financial Disclosure Act (PA 281 of 2023) and the Candidate for Office Financial Disclosure Act (PA 282 of 2023) respectively.

Public officers and candidates are subject to personal financial disclosure, when holding or running for the following offices:

- Governor
- Lt. Governor
- Attorney General
- Secretary of State
- State Senator
- State Representative

For candidates: Even if a person is not actively campaigning and may not intend to file for office, **individuals are subject to financial disclosure requirements when they become a candidate as defined in the Michigan Campaign Finance Act and their candidate committee receives or expends more than $1,000 during the election cycle**. Reports are due in 2025 according to the following schedule:

2025

- Current public officers by May 15, 2025.

- Because none of the applicable offices are on the ballot in 2025, no candidates are required to file as candidates (but, if public officers, must file as public officers).

2026

- For current public officers and candidates for the listed offices, by May 15, 2026, **OR**

- For candidates seeking to be nominated by a political party at a nominating convention for the listed offices, within 15 days of submitting their candidate committee's statement of organization.

Michigan Election Law requires a candidate for office to file the personal financial disclosure report with the department of state before that candidate can assume office. MCL 168.847a.

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% of 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 **s**tate **s**enator must file an Affidavit of Identity in duplicate and partisan nominating petitions no later than 4:00 p.m. on the fifteenth Tuesday before the August Primary. In lieu of filing a nominating petition, a nonrefundable filing fee of $100.00 may be paid to the filing official. MCL 168.163. **Please see the chart at the end of the document for the current election cycle filing deadlines.**

Withdrawal: The withdrawal deadline for a candidate filing for party nomination is 4:00 p.m. on the third day after the filing deadline. MCL 168.164. The withdrawal must be in writing and must be filed with the proper filing official.

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 **Partisan Nominating Petition**. Candidates are strongly encouraged to use the **Partisan Nominating Petition (countywide)** form when filing for state-level offices. A candidate must submit at least 500 valid signatures and may submit up to 1,000 signatures. MCL 168.544f. **A $100.00 filing fee may be submitted in lieu of a petition.** MCL 168.163.

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.

Nomination: A candidate seeking the office of state 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. The minor party must have ballot status in Michigan. MCL 168.686a.

Within one business day after the conclusion of the nominating convention, party officials must submit a certified list of nominated candidates 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. All forms are available on BOE's website under "Ballot Access."

Such candidates will appear on the November General Election ballot.

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 state senator may do so without political party affiliation. These candidates are eligible to appear only 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 state senator must file an Affidavit of Identity in duplicate and a qualifying petitions no later than 4:00 p.m. on the 110th day before the general election. MCL 168.590c(2). **Please see the chart at the end of the document for the current election cycle filing deadlines.**

Withdrawal: The deadline for a candidate who files qualifying petitions is 4:00 p.m. on the third day after the last day for filing a qualifying petition. The

[1] The minor political parties currently qualified to appear on the November General Election ballot are: Libertarian, U.S. Taxpayers, Green, Natural Law, and Working Class parties. MCL 168.703.

withdrawal must be in writing and must be filed with the appropriate filing official. 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 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 **Qualifying Petition form**. A candidate must submit at least **1,500** valid signatures and may submit up to **3,000** signatures. MCL 168.544f. A filing fee option is **not** available. MCL 168.590c.

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).

Write-in candidates

Filing requirements: A candidate seeking election to the office of state senator with write-in votes must file a Declaration of Intent with BOE no later than 4:00 pm. 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.**

Write-in candidates seeking election to a partisan office at a general election are required to run without party affiliation.

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

Filing official

A candidate seeking the office of State Senator in a **single-county district** must file with their county clerk.

A candidate seeking the office of state senator in a **multi-county district** must file with the following office:

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

Filing official by district

	Files with county	Files with state
State Senate	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 13, 24, 27, 29	8, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38

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	$100 or Partisan Nominating	500 – 1000 or $100	BOE or County Clerk depending on district*	4/21/2026 4 p.m.	4/24/2026 4 p.m.
Minor Party Candidates	Convention	N/A	BOE or County Clerk depending on district*	1 business day after convention	N/A
No Party Affiliation	Qualifying Petitions	1,500 – 3,000	BOE or County Clerk depending on district*	7/16/2026 4 p.m.	7/20/2026 4 p.m.
Write-In Candidates	Write-In Declaration	N/A	BOE or County Clerk depending on district*	7/24/26, 10/23/26 Primary, General 4 p.m.	N/A

*See "Filing official" section above for correct filing official based on district.