Filing for Office:
State Board of Education
University of Michigan Regent
Michigan State University Trustee
Wayne State University Governor

Michigan Election Law governs the ballot access procedures for candidates seeking the office of State Board of Education, University of Michigan Regent, Michigan State University Trustee, or Wayne State University Governor. As these procedures are subject to change by the State Legislature, candidates interested in participating in Michigan's November General Election are encouraged to consult our website, Michigan.gov/Elections, for updates.

General requirements

Certain requirements of Michigan Election Law are applicable to all candidates regardless of political party affiliation.

Office qualifications: To be eligible for the office of State Board of Education, University of Michigan Regent, Michigan State University Trustee, or Wayne State University Governor, a person must be a registered and qualified elector of the state of Michigan on the date they are nominated for the office(MCL 168.281).

Affidavit of Identity: Except for write-in candidates, all candidates for the office of State Board of Education, University of Michigan Regent, Michigan State University Trustee, or Wayne State University Governor must submit an Affidavit of Identity in duplicate, immediately after nomination, 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: 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).

Major party candidates

Nomination: A candidate seeking the offices addresses in this guide can gain access to the ballot by receiving nomination to the office at the party's Fall state convention (MCL 168.282; MCL 168.282a).

The party's convention must be held not less than 60 days before the November General Election (MCL 168.591).

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 the BOE's website under "Ballot Access" (MCL 168.283).

Such candidates will appear on the November General Election ballot.

Withdrawal: The deadline for withdrawing for a candidate nominated and certified via convention elapses at 4 p.m. on the fourth business day following the conclusion of the convention (MCL 168.284).

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

[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.

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 any of the above-named offices 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 the 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)). **Please see the Election Dates chart at the end of this document for the current election cycle filing deadlines.**

Candidates without political party affiliation

Candidates seeking the above-named offices 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 any of the above-named offices must file an Affidavit of Identity in duplicate and qualifying petitions no later than 4 p.m. on the 110th day before the General Election (MCL 168.590c(2)).

Withdrawal: The deadline for a candidate who files qualifying petitions is 4 p.m. on the third day after the last day for filing a qualifying petition. 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 BOE or any county clerk's office. Forms may be purchased from commercial suppliers that produce election materials.

Candidates seeking to be on the November General Election ballot without political party affiliation must use the **Countywide Qualifying Petition form**. A candidate must submit at least **12,000** valid signatures to the Bureau of Elections and may submit up to **60,000** signatures[2] (MCL 168.544f). The qualifying 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). Access to the ballot via filing

[2] In *Graveline v Benson*, 430 F Supp 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.

fee 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 any of the above-named offices 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 above-named offices must be submitted to:

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

General Election	Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2026

Category	Filing method	Signatures needed	Filing location	Filing deadline	Withdrawal deadline
Major party candidates	Convention	N/A	BOE	1 business day after convention	4 business days after convention
Minor party candidates	Convention	N/A	BOE	1 business day after convention	4 business days after convention
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	10/23/2026 General 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.