Filing for Office: Supreme Court Justice

Michigan Election Law governs the ballot access procedures for candidates seeking the office of Supreme Court Justice. As these procedures are subject to change by the state Legislature, candidates interested in participating in Michigan's November General Election should visit Michigan.gov/Elections for the most up to date information.

General requirements

Office qualifications: To be eligible for the office of Supreme Court Justice, a person must be a registered and qualified elector of the State of Michigan by the filing deadline; licensed to practice law in Michigan; and at the time of election or appointment, be less than 70 years of age. In addition, the individual must have been admitted to the practice of law for at least five years (Const 1963, art 6, § 19; MCL 168.391).

Affidavit of Identity: All **incumbent** candidates seeking the office of Supreme Court Justice must submit an Incumbent Judicial Affidavit of Identity and Affidavit of Candidacy in duplicate when filing for office. All **non-incumbent** candidates seeking the office of Supreme Court Justice must submit a Non-Incumbent Judicial Affidavit of Identity and Affidavit of Constitutional Qualification 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 forms are also available on the 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. In addition, candidates for the office of Supreme Court Justice should review the Michigan Code of Judicial Conduct.

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 at 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).

Incumbent Supreme Court Justice

Ballot access by affidavit: An incumbent Supreme Court Justice seeking reelection can gain ballot access by filing an Incumbent Judicial Affidavit of Identity and Affidavit of Candidacy in duplicate not less than 180 days prior to the expiration of their term of office (Const 1963, art 6, § 2; MCL 168.392a). **Please see the chart at the end of the document for the current election cycle filing deadlines.**

Such candidates will appear on the nonpartisan section of the General Election ballot.

Withdrawal: The deadline to withdraw the Affidavit of Candidacy elapses at 4 p.m. on the fourth business day following the conclusion of the convention (MCL 168.394).

Major party candidates

Nomination: A candidate seeking the office of Supreme Court Justice can gain access to the ballot by receiving nomination to the office at the Democratic Party convention or the Republican Party convention.

The Democratic Party and Republican Party conventions must be held at least 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 Certificate of Nomination to document the individual's nomination to the office, a Non-Incumbent Judicial Affidavit of Identity and Affidavit of Constitutional Qualification (in duplicate), or an Incumbent Judicial Affidavit of Identity and Affidavit of Candidacy (in duplicate) completed by the candidate, and a Certificate of Acceptance completed by the candidate (MCL 168.393). See the discussion under general requirements section for a more detailed explanation of the Affidavit of Identity filing requirement.

Major party Supreme Court Justice candidates will appear on the nonpartisan section of 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 168.394).

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. MCL 168.560a).

Convention deadline: A candidate seeking the office of Supreme Court Justice as a minor party candidate must receive nomination to the office at the party's nominating convention. The party's convention must be held not later than the August Primary (MCL 168.686a(1)).

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, a Non-Incumbent Judicial Affidavit of Identity and Affidavit of Constitutional Qualification in duplicate completed by the candidate, and a Certificate of Acceptance completed by the candidate. The Affidavit of Identity filing requirement is explained in greater detail above. The Certificate of Acceptance form is available on BOE's website under "Ballot Access."

Minor party Supreme Court Justice candidates will appear on the nonpartisan section of 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 168.394).

Candidates without political party affiliation

Candidates seeking the office of Supreme Court Justice may do so without being nominated at a political party convention.

Filing requirements: A candidate without political party affiliation seeking the office of Supreme Court Justice must file a Non-Incumbent Judicial Affidavit of Identity and Affidavit of Constitutional Qualification in duplicate, and qualifying

[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.

petitions no later than 4 p.m. on the 110th day before the General Election (MCL 168.590a; MCL 168.590c(2); MCL 168.544f).

Withdrawal: The deadline to withdraw a candidate filing for Supreme Court Justice via qualifying petition is 4 p.m. of the third day after the filing deadline. The withdrawal must be in writing and must be filed with BOE (MCL 168.590c(3)).

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 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 qualifying 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 168.590b; MCL 168.590c; MCL 168.544f).

In addition to the above, signatures submitted on the 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)).

Candidates filing sufficient petitions will appear on the nonpartisan section of the November General Election ballot.

Write-in candidates

Filing requirements: A candidate seeking the Office of Supreme Court Justice with write-in votes must file a Declaration of Intent with the BOE no later than 4 p.m. on the second Friday immediately before Election Day **(**MCL 168.737a). It is also recommended that candidates seeking the office of Supreme Court Justice via write-in file the Affidavit of Constitutional Qualification with the Declaration of Intent.

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

[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.

Filing official

All filings for the office of Supreme Court Justice 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	Affidavit (Incumbent only) and/or convention	N/A	BOE	7/6/2026 5 p.m. and/or 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 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.