

Okanogan County Auditor's Office Elections



Okanogan County Local Voter's Pamphlet Administrative Rules

Article I - PURPOSE

The purpose of these Administrative Rules is to establish the rules and requirements for participation, production and distribution of the local voters' pamphlet.

Article II - RULES

SECTION 1 - NOTICE OF INTENT TO PUBLISH A LOCAL VOTERS' PAMPHLET (RCW 29A.32.220)

The County shall prepare a local voters' pamphlet for all elections. The County shall notify all jurisdictions within the county of its intent to publish a pamphlet for each election at least 90 calendar days before the publication and distribution of the pamphlet. Notification will be made via email or standard mail to the jurisdiction's contact on file with the Elections Department of the Auditor's Office.

SECTION 2 - INCLUSION IN THE LOCAL VOTERS' PAMPHLET (RCW 29A.32.220)

All jurisdictions with a race or measure on the ballot in an election in which a pamphlet is produced, will participate in the pamphlet. In the case of a city or town, the city or town may opt to produce its own local voters' pamphlet.

SECTION 3 - COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE LOCAL VOTERS' PAMPHLET (RCW 29A.32.220, RCW 29A.32.270)

The cost to produce, print and mail a local voters' pamphlet is an election cost that is included when jurisdictions with a race or measure on the ballot are billed for their portion of the cost of the election. The Okanogan County Commissioners have the authority to waive financial responsibility of any jurisdiction where participation in the pamphlet would create undue financial hardship. A petition from a jurisdiction must be submitted to the County Commissioners no later than 60 days before the publication of the pamphlet. A jurisdiction receiving a waiver for pamphlet costs will continue to be responsible for their remaining portion of the cost of the election.

SECTION 4 - NOTICE OF DEADLINES AND REQUIREMENTS

The County Auditor's Office will notify jurisdictions of the pamphlet publication date as well as deadlines for submission of materials to be included in the pamphlet. Candidates will be notified of all deadlines and requirements when they file for office.

All Candidate and jurisdiction deadlines will be established by Auditor's Office at least 30 calendar days in advance of the filing deadlines.

SECTION 5 - REGULAR AND SPECIAL FILING PERIOD FOR OFFICES (RCW 29A.24.050, RCW 29A.24.181)

The regular filing period for offices which the Okanogon County Auditor's Office is the filing officer shall be during regular business hours beginning the Monday two weeks before Memorial Day and ending the following Friday in the year in which the office is scheduled to be voted upon.

Districts shall, whenever possible, let the Okanogon County Auditor's Office know of any vacancies of a position within the Legislative Authority of the district, at the earliest opportunity. If a vacancy in the Legislative Authority of the district occurs following the regular filing period and the deadline to withdraw but prior to the day of the primary, filings shall be reopened for a special filing period of three business days. This special filing period shall occur on the Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday immediately following the certification of the August Primary Election by the County Canvassing Board. The Okanogon County Auditor's Office will provide notice to the newspapers, radio, and television in the county, and online of the special filing period.

SECTION 6 - WRITE-IN CANDIDATES (RCW 29A.32.311)

Any person who desires to be a write-in candidate shall file a declaration of candidacy with the Okanogon County Auditor's Office no later than on the day of the primary or election.

1. A write-in declaration of candidacy is timely if filed by this deadline. No votes shall be counted for a write-in candidate who has not properly filed a write-in declaration of candidacy.
2. Votes cast for write-in candidates who have filed such declarations of candidacy need only specify the name of the candidate in the appropriate location on the ballot in order to be counted.
3. No person may file as a write-in candidate where:
 - At a general election, the person attempting to file either filed as a write-in candidate for the same office at the preceding primary or the person's name was printed on the ballot for the same office at the preceding primary;
 - The person attempting to file as a write-in candidate has already filed a valid write-in declaration for that primary or election;
 - The name of the person attempting to file is already printed on the ballot as a candidate for another office, unless the other office is precinct committee officer or a temporary elected position, such as charter review board member or freeholder;
 - The office filed for is precinct committee officer.

No write-in candidate filing under this section shall be included in the voters' pamphlet, unless that candidate qualifies to have his or her name printed on the general election ballot.

SECTION 7 - LOCAL VOTERS' PAMPHLET CONTENT (RCW 29A.32.241)

The local voters' pamphlet shall include at a minimum:

1. A cover page containing the words "Official Local Voters' Pamphlet", "Okanogan County" and the date of the election.
2. A list of the jurisdictions that have measures or candidates in the pamphlet. This may be in the form of a Table of Contents or Index.
3. Information on how a person may register to vote and obtain a ballot.
4. The text of each measure accompanied by an explanatory statement prepared by the prosecuting attorney for any county measure(s) or by the attorney for the local jurisdiction submitting the measure(s).
5. Arguments for and against each measure submitted by committees pursuant to RCW 29A.32.280.
6. For partisan primary elections, information on how to vote the applicable ballot format and an explanation that minor political party candidates and independent candidates will appear only on the general election ballot.
7. Statements and photos submitted by candidates in each race on the ballot. Precinct Committee Officer (PCO) candidates are not included in this publication.

**SECTION 8 - BALLOT MEASURE EXPLANATORY STATEMENTS
(RCW 29A.32.230, RCW 29A.32.241)**

An explanatory statement addresses the anticipated effect of a measure if passed into law.

The statement may be no more than 200 words* and must be prepared by the attorney for the jurisdiction submitting the proposition or measure. A letter from the jurisdiction's attorney confirming they prepared and approved the explanatory statement is required.

If there is no letter from the jurisdiction's attorney or if a jurisdiction does not retain legal counsel for the review, the statement will be submitted to the Okanogan County Prosecuting Attorney's Office for review.

Any appeal to an explanatory statement must be filed with the Okanogan County Auditor no later than 2 business days after the due date for explanatory statement submission. The Okanogan County Auditor's decision will be final.

*For districts that cross county lines, Okanogan County will follow the word count of the county where the ballot measure is required to be filed.

**SECTION 9 - BALLOT MEASURE ARGUMENT (PRO/CON) COMMITTEES)
(RCW 29A.32.280)**

The legislative authority shall appoint persons known to favor the measure to serve on the committee advocating approval and shall, whenever possible, appoint persons known to oppose the measure to serve on the committee advocating rejection. Each committee shall have not more than 3 members, however, a committee may seek the advice of any person or persons.

All “for” and “against” committee appointments must be submitted at the same time measures and resolutions are submitted to the Okanogan County Auditor's Office.

If the legislative authority of a unit of local government fails to make such appointments by the prescribed deadline, the County Auditor shall whenever possible make the appointments. Any appointment made by the County Auditor will be of a registered voter of Okanogan County or a registered voter of the jurisdiction whom filed the resolution when such jurisdiction is a joint district with an adjacent county. If the legislative authority of a unit of local government fails to make such appointments by the prescribed deadline, The County Auditor will put out a Press Release on the Auditor's website posting a request for volunteers to be appointed for any vacant committees. Applicants will have until 4:30 pm on the 5th business day following the jurisdictions resolution submittal to request appointment to a vacant “for” and “against” committee. For jurisdictions where committee members were not obtained, the pamphlet will contain a statement that no one came forward to prepare a statement and it will provide information on how to get involved in future committees.

Each committee shall identify a chair who will serve as the primary contact for the County Auditor's Office.

SECTION 10 - BALLOT MEASURE ARGUMENTS (RCW 29A.32.280)

A ballot measure argument is written to support or oppose a ballot measure. Each argument “for” or “against” a measure can be no more than 150 words* and must be prepared by the committee formed pursuant to RCW 29A.32.280. The Auditor's Office will not edit or advise committees on statements.

Arguments will be shared by the Auditor's Office with the opposing committee once both arguments have been received. Each committee has an opportunity to formulate a rebuttal statement containing no more than 75 words*. Rebuttal statements may only address the issues raised in the opposing statement without introducing new issues not previously addressed in either statement. Rebuttal statements are not shared with the opposing committee.

Argument and rebuttal statements must be signed or otherwise approved by all members of the committee. It is not the role of the Auditor's Office to coordinate between committee members. Once submitted, argument and rebuttal statements cannot be withdrawn or changed. If committee members cannot agree on an argument or rebuttal statement, no argument or rebuttal statement will be presented in the pamphlet. Failure to submit an argument statement will disqualify the committee from submitting a rebuttal statement.

*For districts that cross county lines, Okanogan County will follow the word count of the county where the ballot measure is required to be filed.

SECTION 11 - CANDIDATE STATEMENTS (RCW 29A.32.230, RCW 29A.24.311)

A statement may be submitted by each candidate filing a declaration of candidacy within the regular filing period and will be published in the August Primary Election voters' pamphlet, except for Precinct Committee Officer (PCO) candidates and those offices which skip the primary. If an office skips the primary, the candidate statements submitted for the August Primary Election voters' pamphlet will be carried forward to the pamphlet for the November General Election. If a candidate fails to submit a August Primary Election voters' pamphlet statement during the time frame set forth by the Okanogan County Auditor's Office and that candidate advances to the November General Election, the candidate will not be allowed to submit a statement for the November General Election voters' pamphlet.

If a declared write-in candidate advances out of the August Primary Election to the November General Election, the candidate advancing shall have 7 days from the date of certification of the August Primary Election by the County Canvassing Board, to submit a statement for the November General Election voters' pamphlet. No candidate filing a declaration of write-in candidacy for the November General Election shall be allowed to submit a statement for the November General Election voters' pamphlet.

If a candidate files a declaration of candidacy for a position open during the special filing period immediately following the certification of the August Primary Election by the County Canvassing Board, the candidate shall have until the following Tuesday (7 days from the date of certification of the August Primary Election) to file a statement for the November General Election voters' pamphlet.

The candidate profile information shall be limited to 100 words or less and will be allocated between 4 section headings (Elected Experience, Other Professional Experience, Education, and Community Service). Subsection headings are not included in the word count. When a candidate doesn't submit information for a subsection heading, "No information submitted" will appear in that subsection area.

Candidate statements shall be limited to 200 words.

Candidate statements should only address campaign issues, plans, and ideas of the candidate. Statements shall not contain obscene, inappropriate or libelous language. Candidates' statements shall not comment on or make any judgments about opponents or incumbents. The County Auditor has the authority to reject statements that are deemed inappropriate per RCW 29A.32.230.

Only italics will be used to emphasize words or phrases. Bolding, underlining, and ALL CAPS are not allowed. Tables, lists and bullets are not allowed.

The County Auditor's Office will not correct errors in spelling, grammar or punctuation.

Candidate contact information (name, campaign address, phone number, email, and website) provided by the candidate during candidate filing, will be listed separately from the candidate statement and will not count in word count. If the candidate campaign information is included within the statement submission, it will count towards the word count and will also be in the contact area. Contact information is published even if no statement is submitted.

Candidates not submitting a statement will have "No statement submitted" printed in the local voters' pamphlet.

SECTION 12 - CANDIDATE PHOTO

A photo may be submitted by each candidate filing a declaration of candidacy within the regular filing period and will be published in the August Primary Election voters' pamphlet, except for Precinct Committee Officer (PCO) candidates and those offices which skip the primary. If an office skips the primary, the candidate photo submitted for the August Primary Election voters' pamphlet will be carried forward to the pamphlet for the November General Election. If a candidate fails to submit a August Primary Election voters' pamphlet photo during the time frame set forth by the Okanogon County Auditor's Office and that candidate advances to the November General Election, the candidate will not be allowed to submit a photo for the November General Election voters' pamphlet.

If a declared write-in candidate advances out of the August Primary Election to the November General Election, the candidate advancing shall have 7 days from the date of certification of the August Primary Election by the County Canvassing Board, to submit a photo for the November General Election voters' pamphlet. No candidate filing a declaration of write-in candidacy for the November General Election shall be allowed to submit a photo for the November General Election voters' pamphlet.

If a candidate files a declaration of candidacy for a position open during the special filing period immediately following the certification of the August Primary Election by the County Canvassing Board, the candidate shall have until the following Tuesday (7 days from the date of certification of the August Primary Election) to file a photo for the November General Election voters' pamphlet.

Photo requirements will be provided to candidates at the time of filing.

- The photo may not be a cartoon, caricature or any other image that does not accurately portray the candidate.
- The photo cannot show the candidate wearing a uniform, judicial robe, hat, anything bearing an insignia or otherwise suggest holding of a public office. Sunglasses or other items obscuring the candidates face in the photo will not be accepted.

The Auditor's Office will adjust and/or crop photos as necessary. Photos should reflect the candidate in a professional and tasteful manner.

Candidates not submitting a photo will have a "No photo submitted" statement printed in the pamphlet.

SECTION 13 - CANDIDATE/COMMITTEE STATEMENTS (RCW 29A.32.230)

The Auditor's Office, as a courtesy to the voters of Okanogon County, shall include Federal and State Candidates in the August Primary Election voters' pamphlet. Candidate statement lengths will follow the guidelines set forth by the Washington State Secretary of States' Office. Once a statement for a Federal or State candidate is approved by the Washington State Secretary of States' Office it will be reviewed by the Auditor's Office prior to inclusion in the August Primary Election voters' pamphlet

The Auditor's Office reserves the right to reject any committee argument or candidates statement, regardless of office or filing officer, if it does not meet the requirements of Okanogon County.

SECTION 13 - CANDIDATE/COMMITTEE STATEMENTS (RCW 29A.32.230) Continued

Material submitted for publication in the pamphlet may be rejected if:

- It's obscene.
- It's libelous.
- Contains a commercial advertisement.
- Contains matter prohibited by law from distribution through the mail.
- Contains matter not relevant to the measure.
- Contains matter that is otherwise inappropriate or does not comply with applicable law.
- Was received after the submittal deadline.

If a "for" or "against" statement, rebuttal statement, or candidate contact information is rejected by the Elections Supervisor, a written notice of rejection shall be sent to the committee chair or candidate by email within 2 business days after receipt thereof and shall explain specific grounds for rejection.

The committee or candidate will have 24 hours from the time of notification to submit an adjusted statement or contact information.

Candidates or committee chairs may appeal the rejection of the statement by emailing an appeal to the Okanogan County Auditor within 2 business days of notification. The Auditor's decision on the appeal will be final.

SECTION 14 - APPEAL

The spokesperson or candidate of a rejected statement, "for" or "against" statement, rebuttal statement, or candidate contact information may appeal the Elections Supervisor's decision to the Okanogan County Auditor. A written notice of appeal shall be submitted to the Auditor by email no more than 2 business days after the notice of rejection was sent and shall explain the specific grounds for appeal. The Auditor shall issue a written decision granting or denying the appeal by email no more than 2 business days after receiving the notice of appeal. The decision of the Auditor to grant or deny an appeal shall be final.

If material is rejected, the pamphlet will be printed with the rejected material omitted and the appropriate space left blank.

SECTION 15 - FORMAT AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE LOCAL VOTERS' PAMPHLET

The Okanogan County Auditor's Office retains complete control over content, format and distribution of the pamphlet.

Okanogan County Local Voter's Pamphlet Administrative Rules

SECTION 16 - CANDIDATE/JURISDICTION STATEMENTS AT A GLANCE

Statement Type	Word Limit	Formatting
Candidate Profile Information	100	Allowed: Italics, up to 4 headings (each preceding a paragraph) Not Allowed: Bold font ; <u>underlined font</u> , ALL CAPS, lists, bullets
Candidate Statements	200	Allowed: Italics Not Allowed: Bold font ; <u>underlined font</u> , ALL CAPS, lists, bullets
Explanatory Statement	200	Allowed: Italics Not Allowed: Bold font ; <u>underlined font</u> , ALL CAPS, lists, bullets
“For” and “Against” Statements	150	Allowed: Italics Not Allowed: Bold font ; <u>underlined font</u> , ALL CAPS, lists, bullets
Rebuttal Statement	75	Allowed: Italics Not Allowed: Bold font ; <u>underlined font</u> , ALL CAPS, lists, bullets
Contact Information	Does Not Count as part of word count.	Allowed: candidate or Committee member name(s); phone number; email address; website; committee name At least one method of contact (phone or email) must be provided. Not Allowed: Titles for committee members (Dr., President, Ph.D.)

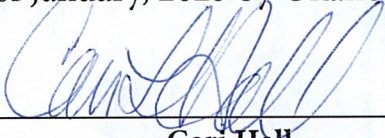
All Statements

Material submitted for publication in the pamphlet may be rejected if:

- It's obscene.
- It's libelous.
- Contains a commercial advertisement.
- Contains matter prohibited by law from distribution through the mail.
- Contains matter not relevant to the measure.
- Contains matter that is otherwise inappropriate or does not comply with applicable law.
- Was received after the submittal deadline.

Article III - Adopted

The Okanogan County Administrative Rules for the Local Voters' Pamphlet are adopted this 1st day of January, 2023 by Okanogan County Auditor, Cari Hall.



Cari Hall
Okanogan County Auditor