

2020
CANDIDATE QUALIFYING
GUIDE



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About This Guide

This *Candidate Qualifying Guide* provides essential information primarily for those candidates seeking regularly elected office in 2020. Candidates should familiarize themselves with the legal qualifications required to seek and hold office, as well as the qualifying procedures.

A brief overview of all candidates' qualifications and qualifying forms always may be found on the Secretary of State's website located at <http://www.sos.ms.gov/Elections-Voting/Pages/Candidate-Information.aspx>; and candidate qualifying guides from previous election years may be found archived on the website as well: <http://www.sos.ms.gov/Elections-Voting/Pages/Publications.aspx>.

For Assistance



Mail

Mississippi Secretary of State's Office
Attn: Elections Division
Post Office Box 136
Jackson, MS 39205-0136



Location

Mississippi Secretary of State's Office
The Heber Ladner Building
401 Mississippi Street
Jackson, MS 39201



Phone

(601) 576-2550
(800) 829-6786



Fax

(601) 576-2545



E-mail

elections@sos.ms.gov

2020 ELECTIONS CALENDAR

Presidential Preference Primary Election DayTuesday, March 10, 2020

Primary Election DayTuesday, March 10, 2020

Primary Runoff Election DayTuesday, March 31, 2020

General/Special Election Day Tuesday, November 3, 2020

General/Special Runoff Election Day Tuesday, November 24, 2020

2020 CANDIDATE QUALIFYING DATES

Party Primary Candidates for President

Qualifying Period Begins Thursday, January 2, 2020
Qualifying Period Ends 5:00 p.m., Wednesday, January 15, 2020

Party Primary and Independent Candidates for U.S. Senate and U.S. Representative

Qualifying Period Begins Thursday, January 2, 2020
Qualifying Period Ends 5:00 p.m., Friday, January 10, 2020

Judicial Candidates

Qualifying Period Begins Thursday, January 2, 2020
Qualifying Period Ends 5:00 p.m., Monday, March 2, 2020

Independent Candidates for President

Qualifying Period Begins Thursday, January 2, 2020
Qualifying Period Ends 5:00 p.m., Friday, September 4, 2020

County Election Commissioner

Qualifying Period Begins Thursday, January 2, 2020
Qualifying Period Ends 5:00 p.m., Monday, June 1, 2020

County Board of Education:

Qualifying Period Begins Wednesday, August 5, 2020
Qualifying Deadline 5:00 p.m., Friday, September 4, 2020

Municipal Separate School District Trustee

Qualifying Period Begins Wednesday, August 5, 2020
Qualifying Deadline 5:00 p.m., Friday, September 4, 2020

Consolidated/Consolidated Line School District Trustee:

Qualifying Period Begins Wednesday, August 5, 2020
Qualifying Deadline 5:00 p.m., Friday, September 4, 2020

Special Municipal Separate School District:

Qualifying Period Begins Wednesday, August 5, 2020
Qualifying Deadline 5:00 p.m., Friday, September 4, 2020

County Special Elections

Qualifying Deadline 5:00 p.m., Friday, September 4, 2020

GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICE

A candidate for judicial, county district or school district office must be a qualified elector (registered voter) of the State of Mississippi and of the district, county or county district of the office for which the candidate seeks election. *Miss. Const. of 1890, Art. XII, § 250.*

A candidate for U. S. Senate or U. S. House of Representatives must be a resident of the State of Mississippi as of the date of his/her election to office.

All candidates for office must never have been convicted of:

- Bribery, perjury or other infamous crime, being defined as a crime punishable by a minimum of one (1) year confinement in the state penitentiary, unless pardoned for the offense. *Miss. Const. of 1890, Art. IV, § 44.*
- A felony in a court of this state; or, of a felony in a federal court or of a crime in a court of another state which is a felony under the laws of this state on or after December 8, 1992; excluding, however, a conviction of manslaughter or a violation of the United States Internal Revenue Code or any violation of the tax laws of this state, unless the offense also involved the misuse or abuse of an office or money coming into a candidate's hands by virtue of an office. *Miss. Const. of 1890, Art. IV, § 44.*

ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS BY OFFICE

UNITED STATES PRESIDENT

No person except a natural born citizen, or a citizen of the United States at the time of the Adoption of the Constitution, shall be eligible to the Office of President; neither shall any Person be eligible to that Office who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty five Years, and been fourteen Years a Resident within the United States. *U.S. Constitution Article II, Section I.*

UNITED STATES SENATOR

Each candidate for Senator shall have attained the age of thirty (30) years, been a citizen of the United States for at least nine (9) years, and, at the time of the election, an inhabitant of the state he/she seeks to represent. *U.S. Const. Art. I § 3, cl. 3.*

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE

Each Congressional district shall be entitled to one (1) representative, who shall have attained the age of twenty-five (25) years, and been seven (7) years a citizen of the United States, and who shall, when elected, be an inhabitant of the state. *Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-1035.*

SUPREME COURT JUSTICE

A qualified elector of the Supreme Court District in which election is sought, at least thirty (30) years of age, a practicing attorney and a citizen of the state for five (5) years preceding the day of election. *Miss. Const. of 1890, Art. VI, §150.*

COURT OF APPEALS JUSTICE

A qualified elector, at least thirty (30) years of age, a practicing attorney, and a citizen of the state for five (5) years preceding the day of election. *Miss. Const. of 1890, Art. VI, § 150.*

COUNTY ELECTION COMMISSIONER

A qualified elector in the county and district from which he/she seeks election. *Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-213.*

MISSISSIPPI LEVEE DISTRICT COMMISSIONER

A qualified elector and resident of the respective county and levee district from which he/she seeks election. *Miss. Const. of 1890, Art. XI, §230.* The Mississippi Levee District consists of two (2) members from each of the counties of Bolivar and Washington, and one from each of the counties of Issaquena, Sharkey and a portion of Humphreys. This election year, one (1) member shall be elected from the counties of Bolivar, Issaquena, and Washington. *Chapter 85 of the Laws of 1930.*

COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

A resident and qualified elector (registered voter) of the district from which election is sought, and have a high school diploma or its equivalent. *Miss. Code Ann. § 37-5-1.*

No person who is a resident of the territory embraced within a municipal separate school district or a special municipal separate school district is eligible to be a member of the county board of education. *Miss. Code Ann. § 37-5-3.*

Each school board member shall be required to complete a basic course of training and education for local school board members conducted by the Mississippi School Boards Association within six (6) months of his selection. In addition, each school board member shall be required to file annually in the office of the school board a certificate of completion of a course of continuing education conducted by the Mississippi School Boards Association. *Miss. Code Ann. § 37-7-306.*

CONSOLIDATED/CONSOLIDATED LINE SCHOOL DISTRICT TRUSTEE

A bona fide resident and qualified elector (registered voter) of the district in which election is sought, and have a high school diploma or its equivalent. *Miss. Const. of 1890, Art. XII, §250; Miss. Code Ann. §§ 37-7-201, 37-7-306.*

Each school board member shall be required to complete a basic course of training and education for local school board members conducted by the Mississippi School Boards Association within six (6) months of his selection. In addition, each school board member shall be required to file annually in the office of the school board a certificate of completion of a course of continuing education conducted by the Mississippi School Boards Association. *Miss. Code Ann. § 37-7-306.*

MUNICIPAL SEPARATE SCHOOL DISTRICT TRUSTEE

A bona fide resident and qualified elector (registered voter) of the district in which election is sought, and have a high school diploma or its equivalent. *Miss. Const. of 1890, Art. XII, § 250; Miss. Code Ann. §§ 37-7-201; 37-7-306.*

Each school board member shall be required to complete a basic course of training and education for local school board members conducted by the Mississippi School Boards Association within six (6) months of his selection. In addition, each school board member shall be required to file annually in the office of the school board a certificate of completion of a course of continuing education conducted by the Mississippi School Boards Association. *Miss. Code Ann. § 37-7-306.*

SPECIAL MUNICIPAL SEPARATE SCHOOL DISTRICT TRUSTEE

A bona fide resident and qualified elector (registered voter) of the district in which election is sought, and have a high school diploma or its equivalent. *Miss. Const. of 1890, Art. XII, § 250; Miss. Code Ann. §§ 37-7-201, 37-7-306, 37-7-707*

Each school board member shall be required to complete a basic course of training and education for local school board members conducted by the Mississippi School Boards Association within six (6) months of his selection. In addition, each school board member shall be required to file annually in the office of the school board a certificate of completion of a course of continuing education conducted by the Mississippi School Boards Association. *Miss. Code Ann. § 37-7-306.*

QUALIFYING FOR OFFICE

Most individuals seeking elected office may choose to qualify as either a political party or independent candidate. A political party candidate participates in the March Primary Election (and possibly the Primary Runoff Election three (3) weeks thereafter), seeking to win a particular political party's nomination for a particular office. The winning candidates in the Primary Elections (or Primary Runoff Elections) move forward and participate in the November General Election as the respective political parties' nominees for the respective offices. An independent candidate participates only in the November General Election and, for the purposes of the ballot, has no designated political party affiliation.

In Mississippi, candidates for special election, judicial office (with the exception of candidates for Justice Court Judge), County School Board, Consolidated/Consolidated Line School District Trustee, Municipal Separate School District Trustee and Special Municipal Separate School District Trustee run as non-partisan candidates and only participate in the November General Election, with no designation of a political party affiliation on the ballot or otherwise.

POLITICAL PARTY/PRIMARY ELECTION CANDIDATES

An individual who chooses to seek election as a partisan candidate and therefore participate in a primary election to seek the nomination of a particular political party must file with the proper office a "Qualifying Statement of Intent for a Candidate for Party Nomination," together with the applicable qualifying fee, on or before the qualifying deadline, as is explained further below. Qualifying forms for party candidates are available from the respective political party's state office or on the Secretary of State's website located at <http://www.sos.ms.gov/Elections-Voting/Pages/Candidate-Qualifying-Forms.aspx>.

INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES

An individual who chooses to seek election as an independent candidate must file with the proper office a "Qualifying Statement of Intent for an Independent Candidate," a qualifying petition, which must be signed by a certain number of qualified electors (registered voters) from the state, county or district from which the candidate seeks election and the applicable qualifying fee, on or before the qualifying deadline, as is explained further below. The number of signatures required on the qualifying petition is dependent upon the specific office sought by the candidate. Each candidate must obtain the certification of the signatures from the Circuit Clerk's Office of the county from where the signatures were collected prior to filing his/her qualifying paperwork with the appropriate office.

Independent candidates should budget sufficient time to ensure the certification of petition signatures by the respective Circuit Clerk's Office well in advance of the qualifying deadline. Qualifying forms for independent candidates are available from the Circuit Clerk's Office or on the Secretary of State's website located at <http://www.sos.ms.gov/Elections-Voting/Pages/Candidate-Qualifying-Forms.aspx>.

WHAT, WHEN, AND WHERE TO QUALIFY FOR OFFICE

FOR U.S. PRESIDENT:

As a Political Party Candidate for the Presidential Preference Primary:

- 1) A Statement of Intent for a Candidate for Party Nomination, and
- 2) Petition, signed by not less than five hundred (500) qualified electors (registered voters) of the state OR not less than one hundred (100) qualified electors (registered voters) of each Congressional district of the state,
 - a. All petition signatures must be certified by each Circuit Clerk's Office of the county from where the signatures were collected, and
 - b. All "header" information must be completed on each petition page prior to obtaining voters' signatures.
- 3) Qualifying fee made payable to the respective State Party Executive Committee in the amount of \$2,500.00,
- 4) Filed with the State Party Executive Committee,
- 5) No later than 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 15, 2020.
 - o If qualifying by mail, January 15, 2020 is not a post-mark deadline, but an actual receipt deadline. The State Party Executive Committee must be in actual receipt of the candidate's qualifying papers and fee by 5:00 p.m., Wednesday, January 15, 2020.

* * * * *

As a Presidential Party Nominee for the General Election:

- 1) A Certificate of Nomination by any national convention or like assembly of any party duly organized in Mississippi, signed by the presiding officer and secretary of the convention and by the chairman of the state executive committee, and
- 2) Qualifying fee made payable to the Secretary of State in the amount of \$2,500.00,

- 3) List of six (6) names and addresses of persons, who shall be qualified electors of Mississippi. Each person listed must execute the following statement which shall be attached to the petition when filed: “I do hereby consent and do hereby agree to serve as elector fore President and Vice President of the United States, if elected to that position, and do herby agree that, if so elected, I shall cast my ballot as such for _____ for President and _____ for Vice President of the United States” (inserting in said blank spaces the respective names of the persons named as nominees for said respective offices in the certificate to which the statement is attached).
- 4) Filed with the Secretary of State’s Office,
- 5) No later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, September 4, 2020.
 - If qualifying by mail, September 4, 2020 is not a post-mark deadline, but an actual receipt deadline. The Secretary of State must be in actual receipt of the nomination and fee by 5:00 p.m., Friday, September 4, 2020.

* * * * *

As an Independent Candidate for the General Election:

- 1) A Statement of Intent for an Independent Candidate, and
- 2) Petition signed by not less than one thousand (1,000) qualified electors (registered voters) of the State of Mississippi.
 - a. All petition signatures must be certified by each Circuit Clerk’s Office of the county from where the signatures were collected, and
 - b. All “header” information must be completed on each petition page prior to obtaining voters’ signatures.
- 3) Qualifying fee made payable to the Secretary of State in the amount of \$2,500.00,
- 4) List of six (6) names and addresses of persons, who shall be qualified voters of Mississippi, equal in number to the number of presidential electors, six (6), to be chosen. Each person listed must execute the following statement which shall be attached to the petition when filed: “I do hereby consent and do hereby agree to serve as elector fore President and Vice President of the United States, if elected to that position, and do herby agree that, if so elected, I shall cast my ballot as such for _____ for President and _____ for Vice President of the United States” (inserting in said blank spaces the respective names of the persons named as nominees for said respective offices in the certificate to which this statement is attached).
- 5) Filed with the Secretary of State’s Office,

- 6) No later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, September 4, 2020.
 - If qualifying by mail, September 4, 2020 is not a post-mark deadline, but an actual receipt deadline. The Secretary of State must be in actual receipt of the candidate's qualifying papers and fee by 5:00 p.m., Friday, September 4, 2020.

Miss. Code Ann. §§ 23-15-359, 23-15-785; 23-15-1093 (1972).

* * * * *

FOR U.S. SENATE AND U.S. REPRESENTATIVE:

As a Political Party Candidate:

- 1) A Statement of Intent for a Candidate for Party Nomination, and
- 2) Qualifying fee made payable to the respective State Party Executive Committee:
 - a. United State Senator: \$1,000.00.
 - b. United State Representative: \$500.00
- 3) Filed with the respective State Party Executive Committee,
- 4) No later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, January 10, 2020.
 - If qualifying by mail, January 10, 2020 is not a post-mark deadline, but an actual receipt deadline. The State Party Executive Committee must be in actual receipt of the Statement of Intent and qualifying fee by 5:00 p.m., Friday, January 10, 2020.

* * * * *

As an Independent Candidate:

- 1) A Statement of Intent for an Independent Candidate, and
- 2) Petition signed by not less than 1,000 qualified electors (registered voters) of the State for the office of United States Senate or not less than 200 qualified electors (registered voters) of the Congressional district for the office of United States Representative,
 - a. All petition signatures must be certified by each Circuit Clerk's Office of the county from where the signatures were collected, and
 - b. All "header" information must be completed on each petition page prior to obtaining voters' signatures.

- 3) Qualifying fee made payable to the Secretary of State in the amount of
 - a. \$1,000.00 for the office of United State Senator, or
 - b. \$500.00 for the office of United State Representative.
- 4) Filed with the Secretary of State's Office,
- 5) No later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, January 10, 2020.
 - o If qualifying by mail, January 10, 2020 is not a post-mark deadline, but an actual receipt deadline. The Secretary of State must be in actual receipt of the Statement of Intent, Petition and qualifying fee by 5:00 p.m., Friday, January 10, 2020.

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FOR SUPREME COURT AND COURT OF APPEALS:

- 1) Statement of Intent for Judicial Candidate, and
- 2) Qualifying fee
 - a. Supreme Court Justice, in the amount of Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00), made payable to the Secretary of State;
 - b. Court of Appeals Judge, in the amount of Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00), made payable to the Secretary of State; and
- 3) Affidavit/Pledge of Judicial Candidate,
- 4) Filed with the Secretary of State's office,
- 5) No later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, March 2, 2020.
 - o If qualifying by mail, March 2, 2020 is not a post-mark deadline, but an actual receipt deadline. The Secretary of State's Office must be in actual receipt of the Statement of Intent, Affidavit/Pledge and qualifying fee by 5:00 p.m., Monday, March 2, 2020.
- 6) Statement of Economic Interest filed electronically with the Mississippi Ethics Commission within fifteen (15) days of qualifying for office.
- 7) Written notice of candidacy, including the candidate's mailing address and telephone number, to the Commission on Judicial Performance within ten (10) days after formally announcing candidacy or officially qualifying for election, whichever shall occur first.
- 8) Campaign Finance Disclosure Reports filed with the Secretary of State's office by 5:00 p.m. on the applicable deadline(s).

FOR COUNTY ELECTION COMMISSIONER:

- 1) A Statement of Intent – Candidate for Election Commissioner, and
- 2) Petition signed by not less than fifty (50) qualified electors (registered voters) of the district from which election is sought,
 - a. All petition signatures must be certified by the Circuit Clerk’s Office of the county from where the signatures were collected, and
 - b. All “header” information must be completed on each petition page prior to obtaining voters’ signatures.
- 3) Filed with the **Chancery Clerk’s Office**,
- 4) No later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, June 1, 2020.
 - o If qualifying by mail, June 1, 2020 is not a post-mark deadline, but an actual receipt deadline. The Secretary of State must be in actual receipt of the Statement of Intent and Petition by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, June 1, 2020.
- 5) Required Campaign Finance Disclosure Reports filed with the Circuit Clerk’s Office by 5:00 p.m. on the applicable deadline(s).

* * * * *

FOR COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER, SPECIAL MUNICIPAL SEPARATE SCHOOL DISTRICT TRUSTEE OR CONSOLIDATED/CONSOLIDATED LINE SCHOOL DISTRICT TRUSTEE:

- 1) Qualifying Statement of Intent, and
- 2) Petition signed by not less than fifty (50) qualified electors (registered voters) of the district from which election is sought,
 - a. If there are less than one hundred (100) qualified electors (registered voters) of the district from which election is sought, the qualifying petition must be signed by not less than twenty percent (20.0%) of the qualified electors of the district,
 - b. All petition signatures must be certified by the Circuit Clerk’s Office of the county from where the signatures were collected, and
 - c. All “header” information must be completed on each petition page prior to obtaining voters’ signatures.
- 3) Filed with the Circuit Clerk’s Office,
- 4) No more than ninety (90) days (Wednesday, August 5, 2020) nor later than 5:00 p.m. on the sixtieth (60th) day before the election (Friday, September 4, 2020).

- If qualifying by mail, September 4, 2020 is not a post-mark deadline, but an actual receipt deadline. The Circuit Clerk's Office must be in actual receipt of the Qualifying Statement of Intent and Petition by 5:00 p.m., Friday, September 4, 2020.
- 5) Statement of Economic Interest filed electronically with the Mississippi Ethics Commission within fifteen (15) days of qualifying for office.
 - 6) Required Campaign Finance Disclosure Reports filed with the Circuit Clerk's Office by 5:00 p.m. on the applicable deadline(s).

FOR MUNICIPAL SEPARATE SCHOOL DISTRICT TRUSTEE:

- 1) Qualifying Statement of Intent,
- 2) Petition, with Affidavit, signed by not less than fifty (50) qualified electors (registered voters) of the district from which election is sought
 - a. If there are less than one hundred (100) qualified electors (registered voters) of the district from which election is sought, the qualifying petition must be signed by not less than twenty percent (20.0%) of the qualified electors of the district,
 - b. All petition signatures must be certified by the Circuit Clerk's Office of the county from where the signatures were collected, and
 - c. All "header" information must be completed on each petition page prior to obtaining voters' signatures.
- 3) Filed with the Circuit Clerk's Office,
- 4) No more than ninety (90) days (Wednesday, August 5, 2020) nor later than 5:00 p.m. on the sixtieth (60th) day before the election (Friday, September 4, 2020).
 - If qualifying by mail, September 4, 2020 is not a post-mark deadline, but an actual receipt deadline. The Circuit Clerk's Office must be in actual receipt of the Qualifying Statement of Intent and Petition by 5:00 p.m., Friday, September 4, 2020.
- 5) Statement of Economic Interest filed electronically with the Mississippi Ethics Commission within fifteen (15) days of qualifying for office.
- 6) Required Campaign Finance Disclosure Reports filed with the Circuit Clerk's Office by 5:00 p.m. on the applicable deadline(s).

2020 Levee Board Elections

YAZOO-MISSISSIPPI DELTA LEVEE DISTRICT:

The Board of Commissioners of the Yazoo-Mississippi Delta (“YMD”) Levee District consists of two (2) members from each of the counties of Coahoma and Tunica, and one member from each of the counties of DeSoto, Sunflower, Quitman, Tallahatchie, Leflore, Humphreys, Holmes and Yazoo Counties.

Party Primary Election for YMD Levee Board Tuesday, March 10, 2020
Party Primary Runoff Election for YMD Levee Board Tuesday, March 31, 2020
General Election for YMD Levee Board Tuesday, November 3, 2020

A candidate who seeks to have his name placed upon the Primary Election ballot for YMD Levee Board must file a Qualifying Statement of Intent for a Party Candidate, together with a qualifying fee in the amount of \$100.00 with the Circuit Clerk’s office located in the county of the candidate’s residence.

An independent candidate who does not seek election based upon a political party’s nomination but by placement of his name upon the General Election ballot for YMD Levee Board must file a Qualifying Statement of Intent for an Independent Candidate and petition signed by not less than fifty (50) qualified electors of the county and levee district from which candidate seeks election and in which the candidate resides with the Circuit Clerk’s office located of the candidate’s county of residence no later than 5:00 p.m. on January 10, 2020. A candidate for MS Levee District Commissioner is required to file campaign finance disclosure reports in accordance with the applicable schedule with the Circuit Clerk’s Office in the office of the candidate’s residence.

MISSISSIPPI LEVEE DISTRICT:

The Board of Commissioners of the Mississippi Levee District consists of two (2) members from each of the counties of Bolivar and Washington, and one (1) member from each of the counties of Issaquena and Sharkey, and from that part of Humphreys County now embraced within the limits of the district. In 2020, one (1) commissioner shall be elected from each of the counties of **Washington, Bolivar and Issaquena** only.

General Election for MS Levee Board Tuesday, June 2, 2020

A candidate who seeks to have his name placed upon the General Election ballot for MS Levee Board must file a petition signed by not less than fifty (50) qualified electors of the county and levee district from which candidate seeks election and in which the candidate resides with the Circuit Clerk of the candidate’s county of residence, together with a qualifying fee in the amount of \$100.00 made payable to the Circuit Clerk’s Office located in the county of the candidate’s residence no later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, May 4, 2020. A candidate for MS Levee District Commissioner is required to file campaign finance disclosure reports in accordance with the applicable schedule with the Circuit Clerk’s Office in the office of the candidate’s residence.

STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTEREST

All elected officials (excluding federal office holders, levee commissioners and election commissioners), appointed officials and candidates seeking office are required to electronically file a Statement of Economic Interest with the Mississippi Ethics Commission. Candidates for elected office must file within fifteen (15) days of qualifying. Persons appointed to office must file within thirty (30) days of appointment. Incumbents must file each and every year on or before May 1st.

Additional information may be obtained from the Mississippi Ethics Commission:

Physical Address

600 North Street, Suite 100-C
Jackson, Mississippi 39202

Postal Mailing Address

Post Office Box 22746
Jackson, Mississippi 39225-2746

Telephone: (601) 359-1285

Facsimile: (601) 359-1292

info@ethics.state.ms.us; www.ethics.ms.gov

COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL PERFORMANCE

Candidates for Supreme Court and Court of Appeals are required to forward written notice of such candidacy, together with an appropriate mailing address and telephone number, to the Commission on Judicial Performance within ten (10) days of formally announcing and/or officially qualifying for election or re-election to any judicial office.

The Commission will forward all candidates copies of: Canon 5 of the Code of Judicial Conduct, summaries of any previous opinions issued by the Special Committee, Special Committees organized for prior elections, or the Supreme Court of Mississippi, which relate in any way to campaign conduct and practices; and a form acknowledgment, which each candidate shall promptly return to the Commission. *Code of Judicial Conduct of Mississippi Judicial Conduct, Canon 5.*

Additional information may be obtained directly from Judicial Performance:

Mississippi Commission on Judicial Performance

660 North Street, Suite 104

Jackson, MS 39202

Telephone: (601) 359-1273

Facsimile: (601) 359-6277

mailbox@judicialperformance.ms.gov; www.judicialperformance.ms.gov

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Excluding candidates for federal office*, Mississippi law requires all candidates for elective office to file campaign finance disclosure reports. Under the law, one is a candidate if he/she has filed qualifying papers or has spent or received *over \$200 in the aggregate* in furtherance of an election campaign. Following the qualifying deadline, all persons who have filed qualifying papers are candidates under the law, even if they have not received or spent any money whatsoever in furtherance of a campaign. Forms necessary for compliance with these laws are available from the Secretary of State's Office or the Circuit Clerk's Office. Campaign Finance reporting forms also may be downloaded from the Secretary of State's website located at <http://www.sos.ms.gov/Elections-Voting/Pages/Campaign-Finance-Lobbying.aspx>.

* Candidates for federal office are not required to file campaign finance reports in Mississippi. Federal candidates should verify reporting requirements with the Federal Election Commission (FEC) by visiting their website at www.fec.gov or calling 1(800)424-9530.

What information must be reported?

All Reports of Receipts and Disbursements filed under state law must be complete and include:

- Name, address, contact information, the office sought and political party affiliation, if any, of the candidate,
- The total amount of contributions received during the reporting period, both itemized and non-itemized, and an aggregate year-to-date total of all contributions,
- The total amount of disbursements made during the reporting period, both itemized and non-itemized, and an aggregate year-to-date total of all disbursements, and
- The total amount of cash on hand to date.

Itemized Contributions

A contribution must be included within the itemized total of contributions on the "Report of Receipts and Disbursements" and separately reported on the "Itemized Receipts" attachment to the report if the year-to-date aggregate total of the contribution(s) received from a particular person, business or entity exceeds \$200.00. A contribution separately itemized on the "Itemized Receipts" must identify the contribution by contributor type, contributor name and address, date(s) and amount(s) for the reporting period and aggregate year-to-date total, and the occupation or employer of the contributor, if applicable.

Itemized Disbursements

A disbursement must be included within the itemized total of disbursements on the "Report of Receipts and Disbursements" and separately reported on the "Itemized Disbursements" attachment to the report if the year-to-date aggregate total of the disbursement(s) made to a particular person, business or entity exceeds \$200.00. A disbursement separately itemized on the "Itemized Disbursements" must be identified by the recipient's name and address, the date(s) and amount(s) for the reporting period and aggregate year-to-date total, and purpose of the disbursement. *Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-807(d)(ii)(iii)*.

Non-Itemized Contributions and Disbursements

Contributions and disbursements with year to date aggregate totals equal to or less than \$200.00 in a calendar year are not itemized. However, these amounts are included in the totals of all contributions and of all disbursements for the reporting period on the “Report of Receipts and Disbursements.”

When are reports due?

Reports are due in the appropriate office no later than 5:00 p.m. on the deadline. If a deadline falls on a weekend or legal holiday, the report is due at 5:00 p.m. on the first working day preceding the weekend or legal holiday. Statutory deadlines are provided on the front of each reporting form and on the schedule following hereafter.

The appropriate office must be in actual receipt of the report by 5:00 p.m. on the deadline. It is the responsibility of the candidate to make sure the report is delivered on time. *Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-807(e)*.

Where to Report?

Candidates for **Supreme Court and Court of Appeals** file with the Secretary of State’s Office.

Candidates for **County and County District Office** file with the Circuit Clerk’s Office.

What types of reports must a candidate file this year?

Candidates for **Supreme Court and Court of Appeals** must file the following campaign finance reports on the following deadlines:

- January 31, 2020 (2019 Annual Report), due if any money was raised or spent in 2019, or if candidate previously ran for office and did not file a Termination Report.
- May 8, 2020 Periodic Report, for the period beginning January 1, 2020 through April 30, 2020.
- June 10, 2020 Periodic Report, for the period beginning May 1, 2020 through May 31, 2020.
- July 10, 2020 Periodic Report, for the period beginning June 1, 2020 through June 30, 2020.
- October 10, 2020 Periodic Report, for the period beginning July 1, 2020 through September 30, 2020.
- October 27, 2020 Pre-Election Report (if opposed), for the period beginning October 1, 2020 through October 24, 2020.
- November 17, 2020 Pre-Runoff Election Report, for the period beginning October 25, 2020 through November 14, 2020 (for only those candidates and political committees supporting or opposing those candidates whose names will appear on a Runoff Election ballot on November 24, 2020)
- January 8, 2021 Periodic Report, for the period beginning October 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020.

Candidates for **County Election Commissioner and School District Office** must file the following campaign finance reports on the following deadlines:

- January 31, 2020 (2019 Annual Report), due if any money was raised or spent in 2019, or if candidate previously ran for office and did not file a Termination Report.
- October 27, 2020 Pre-Election Report, for the period beginning January 1, 2020 through October 24, 2020
- November 17, 2020 Pre-Runoff Election Report, for the period beginning October 25, 2020 through November 14, 2020 (for only those candidates whose names will appear on a Runoff Election ballot on November 24, 2020).
- 2020 Annual Report due no later than January 31, 2021, for the period beginning on January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020.

A candidate should simply check (✓) the type of report being submitted on his/her form. A candidate may submit a Termination Report at the same time as another scheduled report by placing a check in the blank preceding both the scheduled report and the Termination Report. Candidates and political committees are required to continue to file campaign finance disclosure reports in accordance with the applicable statutory schedule, which changes from year to year, unless and until a Termination Report is filed with the appropriate office. A Termination Report may only be filed, however, if the candidate or political committee no longer accepts contributions or makes expenditures and has no outstanding debts.

Campaign finance forms are available on the Secretary of State's website located at <http://www.sos.ms.gov/Elections-Voting/Pages/Campaign-Finance-Lobbying.aspx>. Please refer to the separately published ***Campaign Finance Guide*** for more detailed information pertaining to the campaign finance disclosure and reporting requirements.

Learning More about Elections in Mississippi

For further information about Mississippi elections, visit our website at www.sos.ms.gov. At that location, you will find additional publications and resources for both the candidate as well as the voter.

This qualifying guide has been produced as an aid and a convenience for candidates who wish to qualify for elected office in 2020. Candidates should be aware changes in state law enacted or court decisions made after the printing of this guide may affect deadlines or other substantive provisions of election law. Accordingly, candidates should review all current election and campaign finance disclosure laws.

This guide does not provide information for candidates seeking to qualify for any specially called election in 2020. Candidates interested in qualifying for a specially called election should contact their Circuit Clerk's Office or the Secretary of State's Office for additional information.

CONTACT INFORMATION

**Mississippi Secretary of State's Office
Attn: Elections Division
Post Office Box 136
Jackson, Mississippi 39205**

Elections Call Center	(601) 576-2250
Elections Hotline	(800) 829-6786
Elections Fax	(601) 576-2545
Mississippi Ethics Commission	(601) 359-1285
Mississippi Comm. on Judicial Performance	(601) 359-1273
Mississippi Attorney General's Office	(601) 359-3680