

Qualifying as a Candidate

2026 Qualifying Periods

Noon, Monday, April 20 – Noon, Friday, April 24, 2026

Qualifying for all judicial, state attorney and public defender candidates

Noon, Monday, June 8– Noon, Friday, June 12, 2026

Qualifying for all statewide, multi-county, county and district candidates

The Qualifying Officer may accept and hold qualifying papers for 14 days prior to the qualifying period.

April qualifying – begin accepting paperwork on April 6, 2026

June qualifying – begin accepting paperwork on May 25, 2026

Per F.S. 99.061(2), "The provisions of any special act to the contrary notwithstanding, each person seeking to qualify for nomination or election to a county office, or district office not covered by subsection (1), shall file his or her qualification papers with, and pay the qualifying fee, which shall consist of the filing fee and election assessment, and party assessment, if any has been levied, to, the supervisor of elections of the county, or shall qualify by the petition process pursuant to s. 99.095 with the supervisor of elections, at any time after noon of the 1st day for qualifying, which shall be the 71st day prior to the primary election, but not later than noon of the 67th day prior to the date of the primary election."

Qualifying Methods

- Pay a Qualifying Fee
- Petition Process
- Write-In Candidate

The Qualifying Fee

The qualifying fee is based on the salary of the office as of July 1, 2025 and can only be paid during the qualifying period drawn on the campaign account (exception: Special District candidates can pay with a personal check)

- For Partisan Candidates – 6% of salary
- For NPA and Non-Partisan Candidates – 4% of salary

A list of salaries of offices will be provided as soon as the updated information is made available from the Office of Economic and Demographic Research.

The Petition Process

Requires signatures from 1% of the registered voters in the geographical area represented by the office as of the previous General Election (exception: Special Districts require 25 signatures)

- Candidates who qualify with the Supervisor of Elections — number of petitions required is based on the number of 2024 General Election qualified voters
- Candidates who qualify with the Division of Elections — see DOE website under Qualifying Information

Number of Petitions Required for St. Lucie County:

- Constitutional Officers 2430
- Pt. St. Lucie Mayor & Council 1638
- County Commissioners 2430
- School Board Members 2430
- Special District and CDDs 25
- Fort Pierce Mayor, District 1, District 2 248, 107, 141

Petitions must be submitted to the Supervisor of Elections in the county in which the voter is registered.

Petition Deadlines for the 2026 Elections:

Deadline for Supervisor of Elections to accept petitions:

- **March 23, 2026** – Federal, Judicial, State Attorney and Public Defender
- **May 11, 2026** – State, Multicounty, County, School Board and Special District

Petition Verification Fees:

- Verification fee is 10 cents per petition
- Payment for verifying petition signatures must be paid in advance
- An accurate count of petitions turned in is necessary in order to charge correctly

Write-In Candidates

Write-In candidates are not required to pay a qualifying fee or submit petitions. A Write-In candidate must comply with finance laws and adhere to residential requirements for the office sought. A Write-In candidate qualifies for the General Election only and the candidate's name will NOT appear on the ballot.

Additional Forms Required and Information Provided during Qualifying

Loyalty Oath — Designates how the candidate's name is to appear on the ballot. This form must be notarized and is completed during the qualifying appointment with the Supervisor of Elections.

Financial Disclosure Form 1 or Form 6 — This is the financial disclosure of certain assets, liabilities and sources of income. It provides citizens a way to monitor potential conflicts of interest and keeps them informed on an annual basis.

L&A Public Test Notification — Per Chapter 101.5612, F.S., notifying candidates of the date, time and location of the Pre-Election Day Public Logic and Accuracy Test of Automatic Tabulating Equipment.

Political Sign Information — Information will be provided on usage and removal of political campaign advertisements per Section 106.1435, F.S., Fort Pierce, Port St. Lucie and County signage requirements will also be provided.

Canvassing Board Dates for the Primary and General Elections — Designating the dates and times for canvassing of mail ballots received prior to election day, canvassing of overseas ballots, provisional ballots, certifying results of the elections, as well as conducting the post-election manual audits.

*******IMPORTANT NOTICE*******

Qualifying Ends on April 24, 2026 at 12:00 noon for Judicial Candidates. Anyone in line at that time is allowed to qualify; however, no corrections to qualifying papers will be allowed after the close of qualifying.

Qualifying Ends on June 12, 2026 at 12:00 noon for County and Special District Candidates. Anyone in line at that time is allowed to qualify; however, no corrections to qualifying papers will be allowed after the close of qualifying.