

Lincoln County



Running for Office – A Candidate’s Guide

General Requirements to Ballot Access for County- Elected Offices in 2024

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RUNNING FOR COUNTY OFFICE: 2024

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For more information, call (719) 743-2444 or visit our website at www.lincolncounty.colorado.gov



INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on taking an interest in a county-elected position! This publication will guide you through the general requirements for each of the county offices and accessing the ballot either by Assembly, Petition, or Write-In. It will also provide you with information regarding the Colorado Secretary of State TRACER system for filing your financial paperwork as well as frequently asked questions.

We also encourage you to become familiar with the requirements of Article XXVIII of the Colorado Constitution; Campaign and Political Finance, Title 1, Article 45, C.R.S. Fair Campaign Practices Act; and Title 1, Article 4, C.R.S. Access to Ballot by Candidates.

If you have any additional questions regarding your candidate qualifications, access to the ballot, or other requirements for running for a county office, please contact our Elections Division at (719) 743-2444, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., or by e-mail at clengel@lincolncountyco.us



General Requirements for County Offices

The elected offices of county governments are:

- County Commissioner
- Clerk and Recorder
- Sheriff
- Coroner
- Treasurer
- Assessor
- Surveyor

All county offices other than county commissioner cycle onto the ballot in gubernatorial election years (Colo. Const. Art. XIV, §8). A majority of county commissioner seats cycle onto the ballot in presidential election years, and a minority cycle onto the ballot in gubernatorial election years (Colo. Const. Art. XIV, §6). All elected officers serve four-year terms that begin on the second Tuesday in January following the general election in which they were elected (Colo. Const. Art. XIV, §§6, 8).

Eligibility requirements applicable to all county offices:

Article XIV, section 10 of the Colorado Constitution states: “No person shall be eligible to any county office unless he shall be a qualified elector, nor unless he shall have resided in the county one year preceding his election.” This means that any candidate for any county office must be [1-4-501(1), C.R.S.]:

- i) A citizen of the United States
- ii) A registered elector
- iii) At least 18 years old
- iv) A resident of the county for at least one year before their election.

County Commissioner

Number of County Commissioner Seats

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 6; 1-4-205(2) C.R.S.]

County Commissioner seats are voted on at-large by all eligible Lincoln County voters.

- Lincoln County has three (3) Commissioner seats
 - Commissioner District 1 seat will be open for election in November 2026.
 - Commissioner Districts 2 and 3 seats will be open for election in November 2024.

Term of Office

4 years

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 6; 1-4-205 (1) (a) C.R.S.]

Minimum Age Requirement

18 years

[1-4-501(1) C.R.S.]

Residency Requirement

Registered elector and resident of the district for at least 1 year prior to the election
[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 10; 1-4-205 (1) (b) C.R.S.]

Citizenship

U.S. Citizen
[1-2-101 (1) (a) C.R.S.]

County Clerk and Recorder

This seat will be open for election in November 2026.

Term of Office

4 years
[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 8; 1-4-206 C.R.S., 30-10-401 C.R.S.]

Minimum Age Requirement

18 years
[1-4-501 (1) C.R.S.]

Residency Requirement

Registered elector and resident of the county for at least 1 year prior to the election
[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 10]

Citizenship

U.S. Citizen
[1-2-101 (1) (a) C.R.S.]

County Treasurer

This seat will be open for election in November 2026.

Term of Office

4 years
[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 8; 1-4-206 C.R.S., 30-10-701 C.R.S.]

Minimum Age Requirement

18 years
[1-4-501 (1) C.R.S.]

Residency Requirement

Registered elector and resident of the county for at least 1 year prior to the election
[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 10]

Citizenship

U.S. Citizen
[1-2-101 (1) (a) C.R.S.]

County Sheriff

This seat will be open for election in November 2026.

Term of Office

4 years
[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 8; 30-10-501 C.R.S., 1-4-206 C.R.S.]

Minimum Age Requirement

18 years
[1-4-501 (1) C.R.S.]

Residency Requirement

Registered elector and resident of the county for at least 1 year prior to the election
[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 10; 30-10-501.5 (a) C.R.S.]

Citizenship

U.S. Citizen
[1-2-101 (1) (a) C.R.S.]

Education Requirement

Possess a high school diploma or its equivalent or a college degree
[30-10-501.5 (b) C.R.S.]

Other Requirements

- Complete set of fingerprints taken by a qualified law enforcement agency and submit a receipt

evidencing such fingerprinting at the time of filing his or her written acceptance or candidate affidavit
[30-10-501.5 (1) (c) C.R.S.]

- A person who has been convicted of or pleaded guilty or entered a plea of nolo contendere to any felony charge under federal or state law is unqualified for the office of sheriff unless pardoned.
[30-10-501.5 (1) (c) C.R.S.]

County Coroner

This seat will be open for election in November 2026.

Term of Office

4 years
[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 8; 1-4-206 C.R.S.; 30-10-601(1) (b) C.R.S.]

Minimum Age Requirement

18 years
[1-4-501 (1) C.R.S.]

Residency Requirement

Registered elector and resident of the county for at least 1 year prior to the election
[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 10]

Citizenship

U.S. Citizen
[1-2-101 (1) (a) C.R.S.]

Education Requirement

Possess a high school diploma or its equivalent or a college degree
[30-10-601.5 (1) (b) C.R.S.]

Other Requirements

- Complete set of fingerprints taken by a qualified law enforcement agency and submit proof of such fingerprinting when filing a written acceptance
[30-10-601.5 (2) C.R.S.]
- A person who has been convicted of or pleaded guilty or entered a plea of nolo contendere to any felony charge under federal or state law is unqualified for the office of coroner unless pardoned
[30-10-601.5 (3) (b) C.R.S.]

County Assessor

This seat will be open for election in November 2026.

Term of Office

4 years
[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 8; 1-4-206 C.R.S., 30-10-801 C.R.S.]

Minimum Age Requirement

18 years
[1-4-501 (1) C.R.S.]

Residency Requirement

Registered elector and resident of the county for at least 1 year prior to the election
[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 10]

Citizenship

U.S. Citizen
[1-2-101 (1) (a) C.R.S.]

County Surveyor

This seat will be open for election in November 2026.

Term of Office

4 years

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 8; 1-4-206 C.R.S.,
30-10-801 C.R.S.]

Minimum Age Requirement

18 years

[1-4-501 (1) C.R.S.]

Residency Requirement

Registered elector and resident of the county for at least
1 year prior to the election

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 10]

Citizenship

U.S. Citizen

[1-2-101 (1) (a) C.R.S.]

Access to the Ballot



If you are considering running for public office you will need to become familiar with the requirements of Article XXVIII of the Colorado Constitution (Campaign and Political Finance), Title 1, Article 45 (Fair Campaign Practices Act), and Title 1, Article 4, C.R.S. (Access to Ballot by Candidates). In order to view these requirements, you can visit the Colorado Secretary of State's website at www.coloradosos.gov.

All candidates for nominations to be made at any primary election shall be placed on the primary election ballot either by certificate of designation assembly or by petition. [1-4-102 C.R.S.]

Candidates affiliated with one of the two major political parties may access the ballot in one of two ways. They may participate in the precinct caucus – county assembly process and *obtain party designation by assembly*, or they may forego that process and obtain *party designation by petition*.

Certificate of Designation by Party Assembly

- **Major Political Party**

- No person shall be eligible for designation by assembly as a candidate for nomination at any primary election unless the person was affiliated with the political party holding the assembly, as shown in the statewide voter registration system, no later than the first business day of the January immediately preceding the primary election, unless otherwise provided by party rules. [1-4-601 (4) (a) C.R.S.]
- Assemblies of the major political parties may make assembly designations of candidates for nomination on the primary election ballot. An assembly shall be held no later than seventy-three (73) days preceding the primary election. [1-4-601 (1) (a) C.R.S.]
- A candidate must receive thirty percent (30%) or more of the votes cast by the assembly. [1-4-103 C.R.S.] The names of two or more candidates receiving an equal number of votes for designation by assembly shall be placed on the primary ballot in the order determined by lot in accordance with section [1-4-601 (2) C.R.S.] Candidates by petition for any particular office shall follow assembly candidates and shall be placed on the primary election ballot in an order established by lot.
- If no candidate receives thirty percent (30%) or more of the votes cast, a second ballot shall be cast on all the candidates for that office by the assembly. If on the second ballot, no candidate receives thirty percent (30%) or more of the votes cast, the two (2) candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be certified as candidates for that office by the assembly. [1-4-601 (2) (a) C.R.S.]
- Certificate of designation by assembly must be filed no later than four (4) days after the adjournment of the assembly and may be transmitted by facsimile. [1-4-604 (3) C.R.S.]
- If transmitted by facsimile, the original acceptance must also be filed and postmarked no later than ten (10) days after the adjournment of the assembly at the County Clerk's Office. [1-4-601 (3) (a) C.R.S.]

- **Minor Political Party**

- Assembly of minor political parties shall be held no later than seventy-three (73) days preceding the Primary Election. [1-4-1304 (1.5) (b) (I) C.R.S.]
 - Minor Party Candidates cannot have been affiliated with a major political party at any time after the first business day of the January immediately preceding the general election for which the person was nominated, unless otherwise provided in the constitution or bylaws of the minor political party. [1-4-1304 (2) (c) C.R.S.]
 - Minor Party Candidates nominated by assembly are placed on the General Election ballot unless there is more than one candidate for that office nominated by assembly and/or petition; then the candidates for that office are placed on the Primary Election Ballot. [1-4-1304 (1.5) (c) C.R.S.]
- **2021 Legislative Change:**
 - SB21-250 added new section 1-4-601(1.5), which requires county candidates seeking party designation by assembly to provide notice to the county party chair no less than thirty (30) days before the assembly, unless otherwise provided by party rules [1-4-601(1.5), C.R.S.]

Political Party Petition

Petition Requirements

- Nomination petition formats must be approved prior to circulation by the designated election official. [1-4-903 C.R.S.]
- Designation of party candidates by petition [1-4-801 C.R.S.]

Signature Requirements

- Only eligible electors registered as affiliated with the political party for at least twenty-two (22) days and residing within the district for which the petition is being circulated may sign the petition; and the signer may not have signed any other petition for any other candidate for the same office. [1-4-904 (2) (a); 1-4-801 (1) C.R.S.]
- Must be signed by eligible electors within the county commissioner district or political subdivision for which the officer is to be elected. [1-4-801 (2) (a) C.R.S.]
- Petition requires the lesser of one thousand signers or signers equal in number to ten percent (10%) of the votes cast in the district or political subdivision at the contested or uncontested primary election for the political party's candidate for the office for which the petition is being circulated or, if there was no primary election, at the last preceding general election for which there was a candidate for the office. [1-4-801 (2) (a) C.R.S.]
 - Where any one or more commissioners to be elected to the board of county commissioners will be voted on by voters of the *whole county*, every petition must require signers equal in number to twenty percent of the average of all votes cast in each commissioner district in the county during the prior two contested or uncontested primary elections for the political party's candidates in each county commissioner district that held a primary election in either of those elections. [1-4-801 (2) (c) (I) C.R.S.]

Additional Information

- No person shall be placed in nomination by petition on behalf of any political party unless the person was affiliated with the political party, as shown in the statewide voter registration system, no later than the first business day of the January immediately preceding the election for which the person desires to be placed in nomination. [1-4-801 (3) C.R.S.]
- No person who attempted and failed to receive at least ten percent (10%) of the votes for the nomination of a political party assembly for a particular office shall be placed in nomination by petition on behalf of the political party for the same office. [1-4-801 (4) C.R.S.]
- Party petitions shall not be circulated nor any signatures be obtained prior to the third Tuesday in January. Petitions must be filed no later than the close of business on the third Tuesday in March. [1-4-801 (5) (a) C.R.S.]
- Candidates by petition follow assembly candidates and are placed on the primary election ballot in an order established by lot. [1-4-103 C.R.S.]
- Petitions are filed with the County Clerk and Recorder. [1-4-907 C.R.S.]

Petitions for Minor Party or Unaffiliated Candidates

Petition Requirements

- Nomination petition formats must be approved prior to circulation by the designated election official. [1-4-903 C.R.S.]

Signature Requirements

- Shall be signed by eligible electors residing within the district or political subdivision in which the office is to be elected. [1-4-802 (1) (c) C.R.S.]
- Number of required signatures: The lesser of one thousand (1,000) or two percent (2%) of the votes cast for all candidates for that office in the most recent general election for any county office. [1-4-802 (1) (c) (VII) C.R.S.]

Additional Information

- **Minor Political Party**
 - No petition to nominate a minor political party candidate shall be circulated nor any signatures obtained thereon earlier than the first Monday in February in the general election year. [1-4-802 (1) (d) (II) C.R.S.]
 - Petitions to nominate candidates of minor political parties shall be filed no later than eighty-five (85) days before the primary election. [1-4-802 (1) (f) (II) C.R.S.]
 - For general elections, no person shall be placed in nomination by petition unless the person is an eligible elector of the political subdivision or district in which the officer is to be elected and unless the person was registered as affiliated with a minor political party or as unaffiliated, as shown in the statewide voter registration system, no later than the first business day of the January immediately preceding the

general election for which the person desires to be placed in nomination; except that, if such nomination is for a nonpartisan election, the person shall be an eligible elector of the political subdivision or district and be a registered elector, as shown in the statewide voter registration system, on the date of the earliest signature on the petition (for partisan election). [1-4-802 (1) (g) (II) C.R.S.]

- Minor Party Candidates nominated by petition are placed on the General Election ballot unless there is more than one candidate for that office nominated by assembly and/or petition; then the candidates for that office are placed on the Primary Election Ballot. [1-4-1304 (1.5) (c) C.R.S.]
- Petitions are filed with the County Clerk and Recorder. [1-4-907 C.R.S.]
- **Unaffiliated**
 - No petition to nominate an unaffiliated candidate shall be circulated or any signatures obtained thereon earlier than one hundred seventy-three (173) days before the general election. [1-4-802 (1) (d) (I) C.R.S.]
 - Petitions (for unaffiliated candidates) shall be filed no later the 3:00 p.m. on the one hundred seventeenth (117) day before the general election. [1-4-802 (1) (f) (I) C.R.S.]
 - No person shall be placed in nomination of petition unless the person is an eligible elector of the political subdivision or district in which the office is to be elected and unless the person was registered as affiliated with a minor political party or as unaffiliated, as shown in the statewide voter registration system, no later than the first business day of January immediately preceding the general election for which the person desires to be placed in nomination (for partisan election). [1-4-802 (1) (g) (II) C.R.S.]
 - Petitions are filed with the County Clerk and Recorder. [1-4-907 C.R.S.]

Write-In Candidates

- Affidavit of intent shall be filed stating candidate desires the office and is qualified to assume duties, if elected. [1-4-1101 (1) C.R.S.]
- Affidavit of intent shall be filed with the County Clerk and Recorder if it is for a county office. [1-4-1101 (1) C.R.S.]
- Affidavit of intent shall be filed by the close of business on the sixty-seventh (67) day before a primary election and by the close of business on the one hundred tenth (110) day before any other election. [1-4-1102 (1) C.R.S.]

Filing Campaign Finance Information

If you are considering running for public office, you will need to become familiar with the requirements of Article XXVIII of the Colorado Constitution (Campaign and Political Finance), Title 1, Article 45, C.R.S. (Fair Campaign Practices Act), and Title 1, Article 4, C.R.S. (Access to Ballot by Candidates).

How to become an official candidate for campaign finance purposes

You officially become a candidate after making a public announcement and thereafter receiving contributions or making expenditures in support of your candidacy.

Candidate Affidavit

You will need to file your Candidate Affidavit with the Secretary of State within ten (10) days of becoming a candidate. You can file the form electronically by following the guidelines on the website. Once your Affidavit has been filed, you will receive a login and password from the Campaign Finance department with further instructions on future filings. Email a copy of your Candidate Affidavit to the County Clerk: clengel@lincolncountyco.us.

Campaign Finance Filings

Complete your Campaign Finance filings online with the Secretary of State. Visit the Secretary of State's website at www.coloradosos.gov.

If you have any questions regarding your filing, e-mail the Secretary of State Campaign Finance Support Team at cpfhelp@sos.state.co.us or call them at (303) 894-2200, extension 6383.

Timeline for filing Campaign Finance Reports

A calendar for Campaign Finance filings can be obtained from the Secretary of State website at www.coloradosos.gov. You can locate the calendar from the Campaign Finance section of the website.

Current Officeholder

If you have not decided if you want to run for office in the next election, you can still maintain a candidate committee. You are still considered a candidate while your candidate committee is open. Rule 3.1 requires that you file an amended committee registration within five (5) days of any change.



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: When are the 2024 Elections?

A: The Presidential Primary is March 6, 2023
The Primary Election is June 25, 2024
This election determines each party's nominees for the General Election

The General Election is November 5, 2024

Q: What do I file at the County Clerk and Recorder's Office?

A: The following forms are filed with the Lincoln County Elections Division.

- *Copy* of Candidate Affidavit
- Candidate Acceptance
- Designation of Assembly
- Candidate Petitions
- Write-In Affidavits

Important! Candidate Affidavit and Campaign Finance forms will need to be filed with the Secretary of State. www.coloradosos.gov

Candidates for municipal offices need to file with their municipal clerk in the city/town where they reside.

Q: Is there a timeline regarding when I file my Campaign Finance paperwork?

A: Yes, refer to the Secretary of State's website for the Campaign and Political Finance calendar at www.coloradosos.gov

Q: Is there a timeline regarding when I file my Ballot Access filings with the County Clerk and Recorder?

A: Yes, refer to Title 1 Article 4 of the Colorado Revised Statutes; specifically, 1-4-604 (3), 1-4-601 (3) (a), 1-4-801 (5), 1-4-802 (1) (f) (II), 1-4-802 (1) (f) (I), 1-4-1304 (3) (4), and 1-4-1102 (1) C.R.S. Also refer to the 2020 Election Calendar located at www.coloradosos.gov.

Q: How do I verify my status and affiliation as a registered voter?

A: You may review your voter registration record at the Colorado Secretary of State's website at www.govotecolorado.gov. Click on "Find Registration." The Lincoln County Elections Division can also verify your registration status and affiliation at (719) 743-2444 or mdutro@lincolncountyco.us or rdavis@lincolncountyco.us.

Q: Who do I contact with questions pertaining to candidate qualifications, assembly paperwork, petition format, write-in affidavit, access to the ballot, or general questions regarding requirements for running for county office?

A: Contact your political party chairperson, or the Lincoln County Elections Division at (719) 743-2444, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., or by e-mail at clengel@lincolncountyco.us.

Q: How can I get a list of voters in the district for which I am a candidate?

A: Make a request to the election office at (719) 743-2444 or to mdutro@lincolncountyco.us and pay the appropriate fees.

Q: How can I find out who the other candidates are?

A: Visit the Secretary of State's website at <http://tracer.sos.colorado.gov/PublicSite/Search.aspx>. This option allows you to search by Candidate name, Committee, and Jurisdiction. Enter the following information to search for candidates:

Political Party
Election Year
Jurisdiction
Office
District
Status

Q: Where can I find results on election night?

A: Results will be posted after 7:00 p.m. on Election Day at www.lincolncounty.colorado.gov.





Contact Information:

Lincoln County Elections Division
Lincoln County Clerk and Recorder

Website: www.lincolncounty.colorado.gov

Phone: (719) 743-2444

Fax: (719) 743-2524

E-mail: clengel@lincolncountyco.us

mdutro@lincolncountyco.us

rdavis@lincolncountyco.us

Colorado Secretary of State

Website: www.coloradosos.gov

Phone: (303) 894-2200 x 6383

E-Mail: cpfhelp@sos.state.co.us

