



# MONTANA 2020 PRIMARY AND GENERAL ELECTION

## CANDIDATE CALENDAR

Montana Secretary of State

[sosmt.gov](http://sosmt.gov) • [soselections@mt.gov](mailto:soselections@mt.gov)

# 2020

January	February	March	April
S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29	S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30
May	June	July	August
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September	October	November	December
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DEADLINE	Deadline is 5:00 p.m. on specified day unless otherwise noted	STATUTE
January 9	First day for candidates to <a href="#">file</a> for office	<a href="#">13-10-201</a>
March 2	Deadline to submit new political party qualification <a href="#">petitions</a> to <a href="#">county election administrators</a>	<a href="#">13-10-601</a>
	Deadline to submit <a href="#">petitions</a> of nominations to County Election Administrators for Presidential Preference Primary candidates. <i>(Only required if not eligible to receive payments from the Federal Election Commission)</i>	<a href="#">13-10-404(a)</a> <a href="#">13-10-405</a>
March 9	Deadline for candidates to <a href="#">file</a> for office	<a href="#">13-10-201</a>
	Deadline for candidates to <a href="#">withdraw</a> primary election candidacy	<a href="#">13-10-325</a>
	Deadline for Secretary of State to receive verified new political party qualification petitions from county election administrators	<a href="#">13-10-601</a>
Within 5 days of filing for office	Candidates file appropriate paperwork with <a href="#">Commissioner of Political Practices</a>	<a href="#">13-37-201</a>
By March 19	Election administrators determine whether local nonpartisan primary elections and parties' precinct elections (if applicable) need to be held; notify governing body	<a href="#">13-10-209</a> <a href="#">13-14-115</a>

DEADLINE	<i>Deadline is 5:00 p.m. on specified day unless otherwise noted</i>	STATUTE
<b>March 30</b>	Deadline for <b>local government</b> write-in candidates to file a <a href="#">Declaration of Intent</a> for the primary election	<a href="#">13-10-211</a> <a href="#">13-1-403</a>
<b>April 8</b>	Deadline for <b>Federal, State-Wide and State District</b> write-in candidates to file a <a href="#">Declaration of Intent</a> for the primary election	<a href="#">13-10-211</a>
<b>May 3</b>	Date by which legislative candidates must live in appropriate county, if it contains one or more districts, or legislative district, if it contains all or parts of more than one county (for six months next preceding General Election)	<a href="#">Article V</a> <a href="#">Section 4,</a> <a href="#">MT Const.</a>
<b>May 26</b>	Deadline for independent and minor party candidates to submit signed <a href="#">petitions</a> to <a href="#">county election administrators</a>	<a href="#">13-10-503</a>
<b>June 1</b>	Deadline for independent and minor party candidates to file <a href="#">Declaration of Intent</a> for office; deadline for Secretary of State to receive independent and minor party candidate petitions from county election administrators	<a href="#">13-10-503</a>
<b>June 2</b>	<b>PRIMARY NOMINATING ELECTION</b>	<a href="#">13-1-107</a>
<b>By June 16</b>	County canvass completed, official results are certified	<a href="#">13-15-401</a>
<b>After county canvass is complete</b>	County election administrator issues certificates of nomination to successful local nominees after <a href="#">Commissioner of Political Practices</a> provides notification to county election administrators of candidates' compliance with applicable filing requirements	
<b>Within 5 days of county canvass</b>	Deadline for individual to initiate contest of primary election nomination	<a href="#">13-36-102</a>
	Deadline for unsuccessful primary election local candidates to <a href="#">petition</a> for a recount, if applicable	<a href="#">13-16-201</a> <a href="#">13-16-301</a>
<b>Within 10 days of official canvass</b>	Deadline for successful primary write-in nominees to file a written <a href="#">Declaration of Acceptance</a> (after county canvass or state canvass, as applicable)	<a href="#">13-10-204</a>
<b>By June 29</b>	State canvass must be completed, official results are certified	<a href="#">13-15-502</a>
<b>Within 5 days of state canvass</b>	Deadline for individual to initiate contest of primary election nomination of federal candidates or state candidates	<a href="#">13-36-102</a>
	Deadline for unsuccessful primary election federal or state candidates to <a href="#">petition</a> for a recount, if applicable	<a href="#">13-16-201</a> <a href="#">13-16-301</a>
<b>August 10</b>	Deadline for candidate to <a href="#">withdraw</a> general election candidacy	<a href="#">13-10-327</a>
<b>August 31</b>	Deadline for <b>local government</b> write-in candidates to file a <a href="#">Declaration of Intent</a> for the general election	
<b>September 9</b>	Deadline for <b>Federal, State-wide and State District</b> write-in candidates to file a <a href="#">Declaration of Intent</a> for the general election	<a href="#">13-10-211</a>
<b>November 3</b>	<b>FEDERAL GENERAL ELECTION</b>	<a href="#">13-1-104</a>
<b>By November 17</b>	County canvass completed, official results are certified	<a href="#">13-15-401</a>
<b>Within 5 days of county canvass</b>	Deadline for unsuccessful general election local candidates to <a href="#">petition</a> for a recount, if applicable	<a href="#">13-16-201</a> <a href="#">13-16-301</a>
<b>Within 10 days of official canvass</b>	Deadline for successful general write-in candidates to file a written <a href="#">Declaration of Acceptance</a> (after county or state canvass, as applicable)	<a href="#">13-10-204</a>
<b>By November 30</b>	State canvass must be completed, official results are certified	<a href="#">13-15-502</a>
<b>Within 5 days of state canvass</b>	Deadline for unsuccessful general election federal or state candidates to <a href="#">petition</a> for a recount, if applicable	<a href="#">13-16-201</a> <a href="#">13-16-301</a>
<b>December 14</b>	2:00 p.m. Presidential Electors meet to mark presidential and vice-presidential ballots	<a href="#">13-25-307</a>

# 2020 PRIMARY AND GENERAL INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

*Montana Secretary of State*

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## Filing for Office

Pursuant to [13-10-201](#), MCA, in a partisan election, an individual may not file a Declaration for Nomination or a Declaration of Intent for more than one political party. A candidate may not file for more than one public office. (This does not include precinct committeemen and precinct committeewomen candidates.) Individuals cannot file for nonpartisan offices as independent candidates or as political party candidates.

Exception: Following the passage of [HB 326](#) during the 2019 Legislature, an individual may file for more than 1 Special Purpose District race in a small community that fully encompasses more than one special purpose district and includes fewer than 500 electors.

Candidates who file with the Secretary of State (except write-in candidates) can file online at [sosmt.gov/Elections/Filing](http://sosmt.gov/Elections/Filing) beginning when the candidate filing period opens, or can download filing forms at [sosmt.gov/Elections/Filing](http://sosmt.gov/Elections/Filing).

## Filing Fees

Under [13-10-202](#), MCA:

- (1) for offices having an annual salary of \$2,500 or less and candidates for the legislature, \$15;
- (2) for county offices having an annual salary of more than \$2,500, 0.5% of the total annual salary;
- (3) for president in a presidential preference primary, an amount equivalent to the filing fee required for a United States senate candidate, \$1740;
- (4) for other offices having an annual salary of more than \$2,500, 1% of the total annual salary;
- (5) for offices in which compensation is paid in fees, \$10;
- (6) for officers of political parties, presidential electors and officers who receive no salary or fees, no filing fee is required.

## Term Limits

For information on term limits, visit [sosmt.gov/Elections/Term\\_Limits](http://sosmt.gov/Elections/Term_Limits).

## Write-in Candidates

Pursuant to [13-15-206](#), MCA, a write-in vote may only be counted if the oval, box, or other designated voting area on the ballot is marked.

For a primary election, declared write-in candidates for partisan offices file as party candidates; for a general election write-in candidates do not file with a partisan, nonpartisan or independent designation.

Under [13-10-211](#), MCA, if there are declared candidates for a position, a write-in candidate running for an office must file a Declaration of Intent and pay the filing fee at the time of filing, in order for the candidate's write-in votes to be counted. However, if an election is held and a write-in candidate is qualified for and seeks the office for which the candidate is written in, and **no candidate has filed for the office** (including any declared write-in candidate), an individual does not have to file a Declaration of Intent for the write-in votes to be counted.

Under [13-10-204](#), MCA, in order to **accept a primary nomination**, a write-in nominee must file a written Declaration of Acceptance; have received at least 5% of the total votes cast for the successful candidate for the same office at the last general election; comply with [13-37-126](#), MCA; and have paid the filing fee at the time of filing, unless claiming indigency under [13-10-203](#), MCA, or if exempt from filing under [13-10-211\(7\)](#), MCA (in which case the candidate shall pay the filing fee at the time of accepting the primary nomination).

Under [13-15-111](#), MCA, a write-in candidate who receives the most votes in a general election must file a written Declaration of Acceptance; comply with the provisions of [13-37-225](#), MCA; and pay the filing fee if not already required to have paid it at the time of filing, or if claiming indigency comply with [13-10-203](#), MCA.

### **Campaign Finance - Commissioner of Political Practices**

All candidates, except for some school election candidates, must file a Statement of Candidate Form with the Commissioner of Political Practices. A candidate must file a State of Candidate Form within five days once one of these events occur: the candidate files for office, appoints a treasurer, receives contributions or spends money for the campaign, or has updates to any of their original Statement of Candidate information. The form can be found at <https://politicalpractices.mt.gov/forms>. Reference the [Commissioner of Political Practices](#) website for campaign finance information or contact their office at 406-444-2942.