



# Information for Independent, Minor Party, and Indigent Candidates for 2024 Federal Election

Montana Secretary of State

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## ◆ Filing Deadlines ([13-10-503](#), MCA)

- **May 28, 2024** Deadline to submit signed petitions with affidavits of petition signature gatherers to county election administrator.
  - **June 3, 2024** Deadline to file Candidate Declaration and Oath of Candidacy and pay filing fee (unless indigent) with appropriate filing officer.
- Note: Candidate ballot access is dependent on filing the required campaign finance forms. Contact the Commissioner of Political Practices at <http://politicalpractices.mt.gov>, by email at [cpphelp@mt.gov](mailto:cpphelp@mt.gov), or (406) 444-2942 for campaign finance information.
- **Independent / Minor Party Candidates for President/Vice-President** have special filing dates in August. See [13-10-504 MCA](#) for more information.

## ◆ Links (the first link is a PDF filing form for candidates to print, complete, sign in front of a notary, and submit with the filing fee in person or via mail, fax, or email to the appropriate filing office):

[Independent, Minor Party, or Indigent Candidate Declaration, Oath of Candidacy, and Petition](#)

Use either of the two approved affidavits:

[Affidavit of Signature Gatherer with Notary](#)

[Affidavit of Signature Gatherer with Unsworn Declaration](#)

[County Election Administrators](#)

[2024 Candidate Calendar](#)

[Title 13 Election Laws](#)

[Secretary of State](#)

## ◆ Where to File

- Candidates submit signed petitions with affidavits of petition signature gatherer forms to the county election administrator of the corresponding county of the petition signers. (e.g. sheets of Gallatin County signers are submitted to the Gallatin County Election Administrator) AND:
  - Candidates for federal, statewide, state district, and legislative offices file their Declaration and Oath of Candidacy and filing fee with the Secretary of State.
  - Candidates for local offices file their Declaration and Oath of Candidacy and filing fee with the county election administrator.

## ◆ Signature Requirements ([13-10-502](#), MCA)

- 5% or more of the total votes cast for the successful candidate for the same office at the last general election:

2024 Offices		Votes Cast for Successful Candidate for the Same Office at the Last General Election	Certified Petition Signatures Required (5% of Votes Cast for Last Successful Candidate)
✓	US President, 4-year term	343,602	5,000*
✓	US Senator, 6-year term	253,876	12,694
✓	US Representative District #1, 2-year term	123,102	6,156

Updated July 22, 2024

✓ US Representative District #2, 2-year term	121,979	6,099
✓ Governor	328,548	16,428
✓ Secretary of State	352,939	17,647
✓ Attorney General	348,322	17,417
✓ Superintendent of Public Instruction	310,111	15,506
✓ State Auditor	326,742	16,338
✓ Clerk of the Supreme Court	247,130	12,357
✓ Public Service Commissioner #2, 4-year term	N/A	3,050
✓ Public Service Commissioner #3, 4-year term	N/A	3,050
✓ Public Service Commissioner #4, 4-year term	N/A	3,050
✓ State Senator, 4-year term	N/A	341
✓ State Representative, 2-year term	N/A	182

\*See [13-10-504\(3\) MCA](#)

#### ◆ Other Important Candidate Information

- There is **no earliest date** to gather candidate petition signatures or to submit signed candidate petitions to county election administrators. However, the candidate declaration form cannot be filed with the appropriate filing officer before January 11, 2024.
- Independent Candidates:
  - ✓ Under [13-10-507](#), MCA, a person seeking office as an independent candidate may **not** be associated with a political party for 1 year prior to the submission of the person's nomination petition.
    - For the purposes of the law, "associated with a political party" means having run for office in Montana as a partisan candidate or having held a public office in Montana or a precinct committee representative office in Montana with a political party designation.
  - ✓ Individuals cannot file as independent or party candidates for nonpartisan offices.
- Qualified independent and minor party candidates appear on the **general election** ballot only.
- Under [13-10-602](#), MCA, a political party and its regularly nominated candidates, members, and officers have the sole and exclusive right to the use of the party name. A candidate for office may not use any word of the name of any other political party or organization other than that by which the candidate is nominated in a manner that indicates or implies the individual is a candidate of the non-nominating party. An independent or nonpartisan candidate may not use any word of the name of any existing political party or organization in the candidacy in a manner that indicates or implies that the individual is a candidate of that party or organization.
- An individual who files as an **indigent** candidate is not required to pay a filing fee and must submit the same total number of signatures as an independent or minor party candidate. A candidate who files as an indigent-independent candidate or as an indigent-minor party candidate is only required to file one set of petition signatures.
  - ✓ An individual who files as an **indigent major party** candidate must submit signatures to county election officials by March 4, 2024, one week before the March 11<sup>th</sup> deadline to file the major party declaration for nomination.

- ✓ An individual who files as an **indigent independent or minor party** candidate for the general election, must submit signatures to county election officials by May 28, 2024, one week before the June 3<sup>rd</sup> deadline to file the independent/minor party declaration for nomination.
- ✓ An individual who files as an **indigent write-in** candidate:
  - For the **primary** election, candidates must submit signatures to county election officials one week before the applicable deadline to file the write-in declaration for nomination.
  - For the **general** election, candidates must submit signatures to county election officials one week before the applicable deadline to file the write-in declaration for nomination.