

GENERAL ELECTION 2008

Getting Your Information to Voters in Washington State



Services available to candidates from
the Office of the Secretary of State
www.vote.wa.gov



The Office of the Secretary of State provides two convenient ways for candidates to communicate to voters free of charge. This information will also be posted on the Secretary of State's online Voters' Guide.

Guidelines for Submitting Candidate Information

- Presidential candidates may submit a statement.
- Each Presidential and each Vice Presidential candidate may submit a biography and photo.
- Submit statement and biography according to word limits and format standard. Example provided on back.
- Submit photos conforming to specifications (see next column).
- In order to submit online, a candidate must provide an email address at the time of filing their Certificate of Nomination. Once a statement is submitted, no changes will be allowed.
- Submit all information with the Certificate of Nomination or no later than **seven (7) calendar days** after the Certificate is filed with the Office of the Secretary of State.

Statements & Biographies

Word limits - Statement

State law sets a maximum word limit for candidate statements based on the office sought (RCW 29A.32.121). One **300 word** statement is allowed for Presidential candidates.

Hyphenated words count as two words unless the hyphenation is listed in the *OneLook* directory, an online dictionary search. All statements are closely reviewed. Those exceeding the word limit are shortened by deleting full sentences from the end until the limit is reached.

Word limit - Biography

Each biography must not exceed **100 words** (headings are not included in the word count). Each Presidential and each Vice Presidential candidate is allowed a biography, using the following headings.

- Current Occupation/ Employer
- Significant Career Experience
- Elected Experience
- Education
- Family

Statement & Biography Standards

The Office of the Secretary of State has established content, style, and format standards to ensure candidate statements comply with legal requirements, enhance readability, and ensure accuracy. Statements and biographies:

- Must accompany completed candidate information form and photo;
- Must be typewritten and double-spaced in block paragraph style (if submitted by mail), on a CD in Word, and accompanied by a printed copy;
- Must use 12 point regular Times Roman font. (Use italics only to emphasize specific words or statements. Bolding is not allowed);
- Must not include tables, lists, or other material requiring multiple indents or formatting;
- May include bullets. (However, vertically listed bullet points will be wrapped into a single paragraph);
- Will be rejected if containing obscene, profane, libelous, or defamatory language; and
- May have incidental spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors corrected without altering meaning or substance.

Photographs

Each candidate may submit one original self-portrait. If mailed, the photograph may be submitted digitally on a CD, or as a lab-processed print. Photos:

- Must be limited to the head and shoulders;
- Must be against a light-colored background (not white);
- May be color or black-and-white;
- Must be no more than five years old; and
- Must not show the uniform or insignia of any organization that advocates or teaches racial or religious intolerance, or suggests the wearer has held public office.

Digital photo

- Must be a resolution of at least 300 dpi and not digitally touched-up or altered.

Print photo

- Must be a smooth, no gloss, lab-processed print (not one printed from a home computer).
- Should be no smaller than 4 x 5 inches and no larger than 8 x 10 inches.

Statement FAQ

Answers to your statement-writing questions

What should I write?

Keep it simple and write in narrative. Voters want to know why they should vote for you. Here are a few tips.

1. Write what you stand for or support.
2. Describe your education, background, and/or qualifications.
3. Avoid technical terms that may not be generally understood.
4. Offer your vision. Be positive.
5. Avoid criticism of opponents.

Do I have to write it myself?

No. If you are not a good writer, ask someone to help you. If someone else writes it, be sure you read it before submitting it.

How should my statement be formatted?

Since the space for your statement is limited, the format is very important.

- Format it as an essay (block style).
- To emphasize selected words, use italics only.
- Avoid special formatting using multiple indentations.
- Avoid lists. (These require too much space.)

May I use bullets?

Bullets may be used. However, avoid using them in a vertically listed format. For example:

Correct format

Background: • UW graduate
• Teacher • Planning Commission member

Incorrect format

Background:
• UW graduate
• Teacher
• Planning Commission member

Although you may like the look of the vertically listed version, there is not enough space available when the maximum number of words is used.

Is my campaign information published?

Yes, as long as you complete the Candidate Information form (on the back page) authorizing its publication. Address, telephone number, email, website, and political party are published in addition to your statement (and not included in your word count). Be sure your campaign contact email and web address are functional when you submit your statement.

May I submit my statements and photo online?

Yes, go to www.vote.wa.gov/candidatestatement to submit online -- as long as you provided an email address at the time of filing for office. Please note that once you click the "submit" button, you no longer have online access to your statement, so review it carefully before clicking "submit."

If I submit online, should I mail a copy also?

No. This only confuses the process. If you have questions about the online process you completed, just call the Voters' Pamphlet Office at (425) 788-7878.

Do I receive a draft? If so, may I change it?

A courtesy copy of your processed statement is mailed to you. Read it carefully. Please notify the Voters' Pamphlet Office if you find an error. No other changes will be accepted.

What are the deadlines?

All information must be received within **seven (7) calendar days** of submitting your Certificate of Nomination.

Photo FAQ

Answers to your questions

Professional photo or snapshot?

Professional photographs reproduce the best. If you choose to have an amateur take your photo, here are some tips.

1. A neutral background is best.
2. Take numerous shots. Area should be softly lit to avoid facial and background shadows.
3. If digital, make sure the resolution is 300 dpi or better.
4. Print the photos and choose the best one.
5. If digital, place the best photo on a CD. If film, have a photo lab print a 4 x 5 inch, smooth, no gloss, finished photo.

Is a photo printed from a home computer OK?

No. A photo printed from your home computer will not reproduce well in the Voters' Pamphlet. If you have a photo on your home computer, save it on to a CD and submit the CD.

Candidate Information

If submitting by US mail, please complete this page (typewritten or neatly printed) and return it with your statement, biographies, and photographs to the postal address listed inside. Please read the detailed specifications inside before submitting.

Contact information

The contact information in this section is for use by the Voters' Pamphlet Office only and NOT for publication.

Presidential candidate name: _____
(as it will appear on the ballot)

Vice Presidential candidate name: _____
(as it will appear on the ballot)

Contact telephone number: (_____) _____
(Include area code)

Email address: _____

Campaign address

Campaign address information is required, but will be published only if requested.

The following information does not count toward the statement word limit.

Publish the following campaign address information: Yes () No ()

Campaign committee name: _____

PO Box or street address: _____

City or town: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Telephone number: (_____) _____
(Include area code)

Email address: _____

Website: _____ Political Party: _____

If you need this information in an alternative format, please contact the
Office of the Secretary of State at (360) 902-4180 or TDD/TTY: (800) 422-8683.

Biography Example Biography (not to exceed 100 words)

Current Occupation/Employer: Lawyer, Smith & Sons
Attorneys at Law

Significant Career Experience: Elected to the State
House of Representatives, 1990-2000

Elected Experience: State Representative

Education: Graduate of Harvard Law School,
BA in Political Science from Yale University

Family: Married to John Smith, two children,
five grandchildren

Statement: (not to exceed 300 words) This is your
chance to sell yourself and your experience to
voters

In Summary

The following checklist will help you to successfully submit your information.

- Format as an essay, in block paragraphs only; avoid lists
- Count words – statement cannot exceed 300 words; a bio cannot exceed 100 words
- Legibly complete the Candidate Information form
- If mailing, label all materials with your names and political party
- Submit (either via mail or online) your statement, bios, Candidate Information form, and photo
- Submit your information when you submit your Certificate of Nomination or no later than **seven (7) calendar days** after your Certificate is filed
- Mail to: Voters' Pamphlet, Office of the Secretary of State, 13018 314th Ave NE, Duvall, WA 98019; or

Online: www.vote.wa.gov/candidatestatement

(Use the email address given at the time of filing. If you gave no email address at filing, then submit by mail.)

Questions?

If you have any questions, call the Voters' Pamphlet Office at (425) 788-7878.

Submitting Candidate Information

Online: www.vote.wa.gov/candidatestatement

Mail to: Voters' Pamphlet
Office of the Secretary of State
c/o Candy McDonald
13018 - 314th Ave NE
Duvall, WA 98019