



Secretary of State

Kim Wyman

Presidential Primary Advisory #03

Ballot Requirements

January 27, 2016

Ballots and materials for the Presidential Primary differ from all other elections we conduct.

For ballot requirements, refer to [RCW 29A.56.040](#), [WAC 434-219](#) and the [Presidential Primary Ballot Checklist](#).

It's important to remove instructions not related to this election. Presidential Primary ballots are exempt from Top 2 Primary rules adopted in [WAC 434-230-015](#). For example, notices stemming from the Top 2 Primary must be eliminated.

Issue a Consolidated Ballot

County Auditors must issue a "consolidated" ballot to every voter. In addition to WAC 434-230-015, ballots must meet the following requirements of [WAC 434-219-155\(2\)](#) through [434-219-155\(5\)](#).

- Specify the election as a "Presidential Primary."
- Remove language related to partisan offices and the Top 2 Primary.
- Do not use a pick-a-party checkbox. Party boxes on ballots are not permitted.
- Explain in simple language that votes for more than one candidate will void the ballot. ([RCW 29A.56.030](#)). This instruction is in addition to the "vote for one" requirement.
- Substitute a Federal Election Commission (FEC) statement for the standard Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) statement. Print the statement (or graphic) on the ballot face. For suggested language, see the [Ballot Checklist](#).
- Print both political party ballots on **one side** of a single sheet of paper.
- List the Democratic Party's candidates first, and the Republican Party's candidates second.
- Follow formatting rules for blue and red shaded text boxes or bars. [WAC 434-219-155\(2\)\(d\)](#)
- List candidates in alphabetical order within each party.
- Provide a response position for a write-in candidate following each list of candidates.
- Provide replacement ballots without color if your "ballots on demand" system cannot print in color. All other requirements apply.

Ballot Packet Materials

Requirements for the Presidential Primary affect other ballot packet materials, too.

- Print the return envelope and ballot declaration as designed by OSOS. ([Advisory #01](#))
- Provide the informational insert as designed by OSOS. ([Advisory #02](#))
- Again, remove information related to partisan offices and the Top 2 Primary.
- If the FEC statement is not printed on the ballot, it must be printed twice elsewhere in the ballot packet materials. For example, it could be printed on the back side of the insert **and** on a sleeve or envelope. (RCW 29A.36.161(1)(b); [Clearinghouse #13-03](#))
- Ensure unique voters receive required materials. See “Alternate Ballot Types | Unique Voters” below.

Alternate Ballot Types | Unique Voters

All voters wishing to participate in the Presidential Primary must mark and sign the voter’s standard ballot declaration and political party declaration. Voters casting a Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB) are the only exception to this rule.

Provisional, service, overseas, special absentee, and electronically delivered ballot materials must include political party declarations. Party declarations may be printed on return envelopes, or a separate sheet of paper. Instructions must be included explaining how to return the signed declarations, the ballot, and the privacy sheet.

FWAB. Service and overseas citizens who use this [federal write-in ballot](#), do not have the opportunity to select and sign a political party declaration. However, the FWAB allows the voter to simply write in and specify a single political party (Box 6). This instruction expresses the voter’s intent and should be interpreted as an acceptable party declaration for the Presidential Primary. If the voter does not specify either the Democratic or Republican Party anywhere on the FWAB, treat the ballot as if a political box was not marked.

Provisional. A new provisional ballot envelope is not required. Instead, provide a separate sheet containing both the standard declaration, the political party declarations, and a signature line. Instruct the voter to place the sheet inside a regular provisional ballot envelope.

When processing, verify the declarations and signature on the separate sheet, instead of the one printed on the outside of the provisional envelope.

Service and Overseas (UOCAVA). A new return envelope for [UOCAVA](#) voters is not required. Instead, provide a separate sheet containing both the standard declaration, the political party declarations, and a signature line. Instruct the voter to include the signed sheet in the return envelope. Use this sheet to verify the voter’s signature and declarations.

All other required materials for service and overseas ballots must be provided, including a privacy sheet. Please note the declaration sheet must be **separate** from the privacy sheet. The privacy sheet must not contain declarations or any information that could identify the voter. ([WAC 434-235-030](#))

Special Absentee. If the return envelope for the Presidential Primary is not available, provide the requestor a separate sheet with all required declarations. (See procedures for provisional and UOCAVA ballots.)

Electronically Delivered Ballots. A ballot delivered electronically must contain instructions on how to return the ballot. Similar to UOCAVA ballot materials, replace your current declaration sheet with a new one pertaining to the Presidential Primary.

When applying color to electronically delivered ballots, work with your vendor—it may be best to differentiate the political parties with a bar above the political party heading and not a text box. Many voters are unable to print in color, and text boxes with shaded backgrounds could become difficult to read. Again, ballots must be in the consolidated format.

Presidential Primary Ballot Checklist

This resource has been updated (1/2016) since our Regional Training Workshops. We continue to invite feedback from county election officials.

The [checklist](#) is arranged by section according to the item. Refer to the citations at each section to ensure correct formatting of packet materials.

Please visit our website for the Presidential Primary Advisory Program and the most recently updated [Resources & Training Materials](#). If you have questions about ballot requirements, please contact the Certification and Training Program at (360)902-4180 or CTsupport@sos.wa.gov.