

# Ballot Checklist

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PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY 2016

Certification and Training Program  
OSOS | ELECTIONS DIVISION | JANUARY 2016



# Secretary of State

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The Presidential Primary Ballot Checklist is a resource for election officials who serve voters in Washington State. It was developed for training purposes through the cooperative efforts of state and county election administrators.

This reference tool, in conjunction with the [Presidential Primary Advisory Program](#), provides guidance for formatting ballots and ballot packet materials. It contains citations for the Revised Code of Washington (RCWs) and Washington Administrative Code (WACs).

While the checklist does not contain every ballot requirement or design principle, it does cover specific requirements for our state's Presidential Primary. Refer to the citations to format envelopes, overall ballot layout, political party ballot format, candidate format, the required insert, alternate ballot types, and additional required instructions.

## ENVELOPES

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### Outer Envelope | WAC 434-230-130

- 1. County elections office address.
- 2. Display the elections logo according to *USPS Logo Guidelines PUB 631 Mar. 2015*.

#### *Optional:*

- 1. County branding and/or logo.

### Security envelope or sleeve | WAC 434-230-130

- 1. May not identify voter.
- 2. Hole punched to reveal if a ballot is contained.

#### *Optional:*

- 1. Additional instructions and/or county branding.

- 2. Label “security” envelope.

Return Envelope; Postal Address Side | RCW 29A.40.091 and WAC 434-230-130

- 1. A hole punched in a manner that will reveal if a security envelope is inside.
- 2. Display the words "APPLY FIRST-CLASS POSTAGE HERE" or "POSTAGE PAID" in the upper right-hand corner.
- 3. Conform to postal regulations.
- 4. Display elections logo according to *USPS Logo Guidelines PUB 631 Mar. 2015*.
- 5. Envelopes for overseas and service voters must include free return postage under 39 USC 3406 using DDM permit.

*Optional:*

- 1. County branding and logo provided it does not interfere with the voter declaration format.
- 2. Label “return” envelope.
- 3. Specific amount of first-class postage needed to mail ballot per WAC 434-250-200.

Return Envelope; Voter Declarations; Template | WAC 434-230-015, WAC 434-230-130

- 1. Required format designated by the Secretary of State’s template. Resize format only to accommodate county mailing needs. (See Presidential Primary [Advisory 01](#)).
- 2. Official designated colors for party check boxes. Exception: On-demand printing and web-delivered envelopes are not required to use color on party declaration checkboxes.
- 3. Conform to postal regulations.

*Optional:*

- 1. County branding or logo may be used, provided requirements of Secretary of State and/or USPS are not affected.
- 2. Label/identify “return” envelope.
- 3. How to complete and sign the declaration on the return envelope.

## OVERALL BALLOT LAYOUT

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Overall Design | WAC 434-230-012, 434-219-155(2), and [Advisory 03, "Ballot Requirements"](#)

- 1. Allow instructions to occupy their own column, if space allows.
- 2. Avoid use of ALL CAP letters, centered type, and using more than one font.
- 3. If space allows, use a 12-point type. Avoid type size lower than 8-point.
- 4. Consistent use of shading and/or color.
- 5. Consistent font and type size for ballot text.
- 6. Consolidated ballot layout consisting of main heading, instructions and both party ballots on the same side of paper.
- 7. Consolidated ballot order – Instructions, Democratic, and Republican.
- 8. No political party checkbox printed on the ballot.

Main Heading | WAC 434-230-015(1), WAC 434-219-155

- 1. Presidential Primary.
- 2. County.
- 3. Date of primary.

Overall Instructions; printed on consolidated ballot | WAC 434-230-015(1), WAC 434-219-155(2)(b), RCW 29A.36.161, and RCW 29A.56.040(4)

- 1. How to mark a vote on the ballot.
- 2. How to mark a write-in vote.
- 3. Refer to insert for detailed instructions on how to vote.
- 4. Notice in clear, simple language, and printed in large type stating that a ballot with votes for more than one candidate is void. The notice must appear on the face of each presidential primary ballot.

- 5. Clear delineation between the instructions and the party ballots listing candidates by using white space, illustration, shading, color, symbol, font size, or bold type.
- 6. FEC (Federal Election Commission) statement printed on consolidated ballot with instructions: “For a list of the people and organizations that donated to Presidential candidates’ campaigns, visit [www.fec.gov](http://www.fec.gov).” This statement substitutes for the PDC statement.

*Optional:*

- 1. Print FEC statement on the envelope *and* in accompanying materials (instead of printing on the consolidated ballot within instructions).
- 2. Specific instructions for marking the ballot.
- 3. Explanation to voter why the ballot voted must be of the same party marked on the envelope.

Instructions; printed on ballot in either overall instructions or in heading of each race | WAC 434-230-015

- 1. Number of party ballots/ candidates the voter may vote (e.g., “vote for only one candidate within the party you marked on your envelope”).

*Optional:*

- 1. May use varying sizes and colors of ballots if used consistently throughout the region, area, or jurisdiction. Colors may also be used to differentiate between official ballots and provisional or sample ballots.
- 2. May use instructional graphics provided by OSOS.

## POLITICAL PARTY BALLOT FORMAT

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Party Ballot, Office Name | WAC 434-219-155(2)

- 1. Candidates of each party must appear in a single column. The list may not wrap to a second column or the next page.
- 2. “Republican Party” or “Democratic Party” printed immediately above the associated list of candidates.

*Optional:*

- 1. Number of party ballots/candidates to be voted (e.g., “vote for one,” “vote for one candidate and only within the party you marked,” or “vote for only one candidate if declaring with the \_\_\_\_\_ Party.) This information may also be in the instructions.

Color | WAC 434-219-155(2)(d)

- 1. A "Democratic Party" heading within or under a blue shaded bar and a "Republican Party" heading within or under a red shaded bar printed immediately above the associated list of candidates. Other major political parties included in the primary must have similar headings and color.
- 2. SEE section *Alternate Types of Ballots* for exceptions

Write-in Area; following each list of candidates | WAC 434-230-035(4)

- 1. Response position (target area) and space to write in a candidate name.

## CANDIDATE FORMAT

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List of Candidate Names | WAC 434-219-155 (2)

- 1. For each political party ballot, list candidates together in alphabetical order as certified by the Secretary of State.
- 2. Print candidates’ names in a type style and point size that can be easily read. If necessary, type point size may be adjusted to fit an overly long candidate name.

## REQUIRED INSERT

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Required Inserts | WAC 434-219-155 (3)

- 1. Instructional insert provided by OSOS. Explains how to sign and mark the ballot in accordance with the political party declaration. (Presidential Primary [Advisory 02](#))

*Optional:*

1. Additional information may be printed on the opposite side of the required insert.

## ALTERNATE TYPES OF BALLOTS

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Provisional, service, overseas, electronically delivered, and special absentee ballots | WAC 434-230-215(4), RCW 29A.36.115 and WAC 434-230-010

1. Political party declarations must be included on either
- a. the return ballot envelope; or
  - b. a separate sheet of paper with instructions for the voter to place the signed declaration in the ballot return envelope, but outside of the security envelope.
2. Service and overseas ballots: must contain a privacy sheet and instructions for returning the ballot and signed declaration electronically.
3. Per RCW 29A.36.115 and WAC 434-230-010, provisional and sample ballots must be visually distinguishable from the official ballot.
4. Provisional voters must be provided free access information.
5. Ballots printed on demand by the county or voter are not required to use color for party designation and ballot identification if such a printer is not available.

## ADDITIONAL REQUIRED BALLOT MATERIALS

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These instructions may be located on the ballot, on the back of the separate insert, on the security or return envelopes.

Additional Instructions | RCW 29A.36.161, RCW 29A.40.091, WAC 434-230-015, WAC 434-219-155

1. How to cancel/correct/change a vote by drawing a line through the text of the candidate's name or ballot response. Graphic is optional. Wording should not require the voter to mark another choice.
2. Notice about over voting the ballot.
3. How to complete and sign the declaration on the return envelope.

- 4. The option of making a “mark” witnessed by two other people when unable to sign the declaration.
- 5. How to place the ballot in the security envelope/sleeve, and the security envelope/sleeve into the return envelope.
- 6. How and where to obtain a replacement ballot if the original ballot is destroyed, spoiled, or lost.
- 7. Explanation that postage is required, or exactly how much postage is required. For exceptions and more details about return postage, see WAC 434-250-200.
- 8. Notice that in order to be counted, the ballot must be either postmarked no later than Election Day or deposited at a designated deposit site no later than 8 pm Election Day.
- 9. How a voter can learn about the locations, hours, and services of voting centers and ballot deposit sites, including accessibility of AVUs.
- 10. If FEC statement is not printed on the ballot, it must be printed on the ballot envelope and accompanying ballot materials.

*Optional:*

- 1. Any additional information the County Auditor deems necessary.