



2026 Candidate Handbook

Island County Elections
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About This Guide

This guide should be used in conjunction with state and local laws, not in place of them. The Revised Code of Washington, Washington Administrative Code and other notations are offered as references for additional research. The material contained herein may change due to new legislation, judicial determination or rule changes.

Island County Auditor.....	Sheilah Crider
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Open Offices, Incumbents, and Filing Fees

Information is current as of **January 15, 2026**. Visit www.islandcountywa.gov/560/Candidate-Information for updates.

Office	Fee	Incumbent	Term
FEDERAL			
U.S. Representative, Congressional District 2	\$1,740.00	Rick Larsen	2 years
LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT 10			
State Representative, Position 1	\$676.88	Clyde Shavers	2 years
State Representative, Position 2	\$676.88	Dave Paul	2 years
ISLAND COUNTY			
County Commissioner, District 3	\$1,216.03	Janet St. Clair	4 years
County Assessor	\$1,094.45	Kelly Todd Mauck	4 years
County Auditor	\$1,094.45	Sheilah Crider	4 years
County Clerk	\$1,094.45	Debra Van Pelt	4 years
County Coroner	\$1,094.45	Shantel Porter	4 years
County Prosecuting Attorney	\$2,374.60	Greg Banks	4 years
County Sheriff	\$1,529.24	Rick Felici	4 years
County Treasurer	\$1,094.45	Tony Lam	4 years
JUDICIAL			
Supreme Court Justice, Position 1	\$2,620.11	Colleen Melody	6 years
Supreme Court Justice, Position 3	\$2,620.11	Raquel Montoya-Lewis	6 years
Supreme Court Justice, Position 4	\$2,620.11	Charles W. Johnson	6 years
Supreme Court Justice, Position 7	\$2,620.11	Debra L. Stephens	6 years
Island County District Court Judge	\$2,031.69	Ronald A.M. Costeck	4 years SF
PUBLIC UTILITIES DISTRICT NO. 1			
Elections for this district are administered by Snohomish County.			
PRECINCT COMMITTEE OFFICERS			
Precinct Committee Officer (according to political party and precinct)	No Fee	Various	2 years

SF: Short and Full term positions are sworn in and assume office as soon as the General Election is certified, then are sworn in again as appropriate for the full term.

U: Unexpired term positions are sworn in and assume office as soon as the General Election is certified.

2026 Election Calendar and Deadlines

February 10, 2026 – Special Election

December 12, 2025	Resolutions and Explanatory Statements due to Auditor Pro and Con Committee assignments due to Auditor
December 19, 2025	Pro and Con voter pamphlet statements due to Auditor
January 11, 2026	Deadline to mail Military and Overseas ballots
January 23, 2026	Deadline to mail Standard ballots
February 2, 2026	Deadline to receive registrations and voter updates online and by mail
February 12, 2026	Random check of ballot counting equipment
February 20, 2026	County certifies final results

April 28, 2026 – Special Election

February 27, 2026	Resolutions and Explanatory Statements due to Auditor Pro and Con Committee assignments due to Auditor
March 6, 2026	Pro and Con voter pamphlet statements due to Auditor
March 29, 2026	Deadline to mail Military and Overseas ballots
April 10, 2026	Deadline to mail Standard ballots
April 28, 2026	Deadline to receive registrations and voter updates online and by mail
April 30, 2026	Random check of ballot counting equipment
May 8, 2026	County certifies final results

May 4-8, 2026 – Candidate Filing Week

April 20, 2026	First day filing may be received by postal mail
May 4-8, 2026	Candidates file for office
May 11, 2026	Candidate withdrawal deadline
May 12, 2026	Secretary of State certifies list of candidates to counties
May 19, 2026	Candidate statements and photographs for voters pamphlet due

August 4, 2026 – Primary Election

May 1, 2026	Resolutions and Explanatory Statements due to Auditor Pro and Con Committee assignments due to Auditor
May 8, 2026	Pro and Con voter pamphlet statements due to Auditor
June 20, 2026	Deadline to mail Military and Overseas ballots
July 17, 2026	Deadline to mail Standard ballots
July 27, 2026	Deadline to receive registrations and voter updates online and by mail
August 6, 2026	Random check of ballot counting equipment
August 18, 2026	County certifies final results
August 21, 2026	Secretary of State certifies statewide results

November 3, 2026 – General Election

August 4, 2026	Resolutions and Explanatory Statements due to Auditor Pro and Con Committee assignments due to Auditor
August 14, 2026	Pro and Con voter pamphlet statements due to Auditor
September 19, 2026	Deadline to mail Military and Overseas ballots
October 16, 2026	Deadline to mail Standard ballots
October 26, 2026	Deadline to receive registrations and voter updates online and by mail
November 5, 2026	Random check of ballot counting equipment
November 24, 2026	County certifies final results
December 3, 2026	Secretary of State certifies statewide results

For additional calendar items, visit at: <https://www.islandcountywa.gov/423/Elections-Voter-Registration>

Filing for Office

Where to file

Candidates file with the Washington Secretary of State for the following offices:

- Federal Offices
- State Offices
- Judicial Offices

Candidates file with Island County Elections for the following offices:

- County Offices
- Local Offices

How to file in Island County

Island County allows candidates to file in person or online at www.islandcountywa.gov/560/Candidate-Information

Requirements

- Must be a registered voter of the district and meet the residency requirements for the office for which you are filing. (see page 10)
- Official Declaration of Candidacy must be filed and approved.
- Credit card payment of filing fees is available only for online filing.
- Cash/check/money order payments must be made when filing at the Island County Elections Office.
- Provide an email address for the candidate or campaign.

Upon completion of these items, candidate names will appear on the official list of candidates for office.

NOTE: Candidate Filing Fees are not refundable.

The online filing tool will give you step by step instructions, email a confirmation notice, alert you when other candidates file in your race, and provide a link to submit your Voters' Pamphlet information. (Precinct Committee Officer candidate statements are not published in the Online Voter Guide or printed Local Voters' Pamphlet.)

Candidates may file in person at the Elections Office.
400 North Main Street
Coupeville, WA 98239

When to file	File online: Monday, May 4 at 8:00 a.m. through Friday, May 8 at 5:00 p.m.
	File in person Monday through Friday, May 4-May 8, 2026 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Campaign Information	It is strongly recommended that when filing, you provide a campaign mailing address, email, telephone number, and website. By statute, the contact information that you provide when filing for office is public record and will be published on our website.
Withdrawal of Filing RCW 29A.24.131	A candidate may withdraw a Declaration of Candidacy in writing through Monday, May 11, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. There shall be no withdrawal period for Declarations filed during special filing periods. Filing fees are not refundable.
Order of Appearance On Ballots, Local Voters' Pamphlet and Online Voters' Guide	The order of candidates' names on the Primary Election ballot, Local Voters' Pamphlet and Online Voters' Guide is determined by lot draw. The lot draw occurs after the close of candidate filing. Candidate Lot Draw is scheduled for Friday, May 8, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. in the Elections Office. The process is open to all candidates, campaigns, political parties, party observers, media and members of the public. (RCW 29A.36.131) In the General Election, the candidate with the most votes in the Primary Election will be listed first on the ballot, as well as in the General Election Local Voters' Pamphlet and Online Voters' Guide. If no Primary Election is held for an office, candidates appear in lot draw order on the General Election ballot, Local Voters' Pamphlet and Online Voters' Guide.

Local Voters' Pamphlet and Online Voter's Guide

Submit your Voters' Pamphlet Information online **RCW 29A.32.210**

Per state law, Island County will print and distribute a Local Voters' Pamphlet in addition to an Online Voters' Guide for all elections. This provides an opportunity for candidates (except Precinct Committee Officers) to publish biographical information, photo, candidate statement, and contact information.

After you file for office, you will receive an email with a link. Use this link to submit your biographical information, candidate statement, and photo for publication in the Local Voters' Pamphlet and Online Voters' Guide.

Any candidate who experiences technical problems should call the Elections Division immediately.

Candidate Biographical Information and Statement

Biographical Information:

The biographical information must be **100** words or less allocated between the four section headings.

Biographical information should be in accordance with the four section headings listed below. Section headings are not included in the word count.

- Elected Experience.
- Other Professional Experience.
- Education.
- Community Service.

When a candidate does not submit a response to a section heading, the heading will appear and "No information submitted" will appear in the section area.

Statement Information: Length

The word limit for candidate statements is **200** words.

Microsoft Word will be used to verify word counts. Each part of a hyphenated word will be counted as a separate word. (Example - "Around-the-corner" = 3 words)

Statements exceeding word limits will be shortened by the Elections Division without notice and without consulting the candidate. Submissions are shortened by deleting full sentences, starting from the end of the section until the limit for that section is reached.

Format

Italics may be used to emphasize specific words or sentences. Any other formatting, such as all caps, bold or underlining is not permitted. Caps, bold and underlines will be converted to italics by the Elections Division.

Lists and bullets are not permitted. Lists and bullets will be converted by the Elections Division to paragraph style.

Content

Candidates may upload their own statements and photographs directly through the link in the email received after filing for office. The Auditor's Office does not make corrections to statements and assumes no responsibility for errors and/or inaccuracies in the original statement submitted by the candidate.

In a document of this magnitude, it is inevitable that material submitted for publication may contain some inadvertent errors in spelling, punctuation or syntax which could adversely affect the readability of the statement and improperly reflect on the candidate. We encourage candidates or committees to spell check and proofread statements before submittal and to cc themselves when submitting a statement online.

Unacceptable Statements:

Candidates will be notified in writing if their statement or any portion thereof contains what the Auditor believes are obscene, libelous or otherwise inappropriate material.

Statements may not ask for contributions or make commercial solicitations.

Candidate Photo Rules

Candidates may submit photographs in paper or electronic form to be included with their statements.

A candidate's photograph cannot be more than five years old, and must be head and shoulders only.

A candidate's photograph must be of the candidate only.

Any photograph that reveals clothing, uniform or insignia suggestive of holding public office is prohibited.

No photograph may include hats, buttons, jewelry or clothing showing words, insignia or symbols.

Paper photographs should be glossy print, color or black and white, not smaller than 3 x 5 inches or larger than 5 x 7 inches. Digital photographs must be either .tiff or .jpg format.

Public Disclosure Commission

Washington State Public Disclosure Commission

The Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) provides public access to accurate information about the financing of political campaigns, lobbyist expenditures, and the financial affairs of public officials and candidates. The commission ensures compliance and enforcement of Washington's disclosure and campaign finance laws.

Note: Candidates are advised to verify that they are in compliance with all state, county and local laws. Candidates must contact the PDC directly with any questions or concerns.

Forms, Instruction Manuals and Brochures Available Online

Visit the PDC website at www.pdc.wa.gov for public disclosure information and forms. Call PDC at (360) 753-1111. Paper forms and instruction manuals are not available at the Elections Office.

Where to file PDC Reports

File forms electronically on the PDC website:
www.pdc.wa.gov

Candidate Filing Guidelines

Residency Requirements RCW 42.04.020

No person shall be competent to qualify for or hold any elective public office within the state of Washington, or any county, district, precinct, school district, municipal corporation or other district or political subdivision, unless they are a citizen of the United States and state of Washington and an elector of such county, district, precinct, school district, municipality or other district or political subdivision.

You must be a resident at the time of candidate filing.

No Double Filings RCW 29A.36.201

Excluding the office of Precinct Committee Officer, a candidate's name shall not appear for more than one office on the ballot.

**Candidates Who Lack Funds to
Pay the Filing Fee**
RCW 29A.24.091, 101, 111
29A.84.261

Candidates or candidate committees lacking sufficient income or assets to pay the filing fee may submit a filing fee petition. The petition must be presented with the Declaration of Candidacy. The form is available at the Elections Office. It must contain one valid (registered voter) signature for each dollar of the filing fee. For example, if the filing fee for the office you are seeking is \$200.00, the petition must contain 200 valid signatures of registered voters who reside in the district/ jurisdiction of the office you are seeking. You should gather extra signatures to allow for invalid signers. No signatures may be submitted after the close of candidate filing. Signatures cannot provide a discount on the filing fee. Candidate must have all signatures equal to the dollar amount or pay the full filing fee.

Write-in Candidates
RCW 29A.24.311, 320,
29A.60.021

Any person who desires to be a write-in candidate shall file a Declaration of Candidacy no later than 8:00 pm on the day of the primary or election.

No votes shall be counted for a write-in candidate who has not properly filed a write-in declaration of candidacy.

Votes cast for write-in candidates who have filed declarations need only specify the name of the candidate in the appropriate location on the ballot to be counted.

No person may file a write-in declaration if:

- For the General Election, the candidate lost the Primary Election, either as a candidate or a write-in candidate for the same office.
- A valid write-in declaration for the candidate has already been filed for another office.
- The candidate already appears on the ballot for another office, with the exception of Precinct Committee Officer.

No write-in candidate filing under RCW 29A.24.311 will be included in the Local Voters' Pamphlet or Online Voters' Guide unless that candidate qualifies to have his or her name printed on the General Election ballot.

Voids in Candidacy
RCW 29A.24.181

A void in candidacy occurs if, after the regular filing week, but prior to the day of the primary:

- No candidate has filed for office
- All candidates who filed have withdrawn, or
- All candidates who have filed for the office die or have been disqualified.

There is no void in candidacy as long as there is at least one viable candidate.

If a void in candidacy exists, a special three-day filing period will be opened. Notice of the special filing period will be given by notifying the media and will be posted on the Elections homepage.

All candidates who file during the special filing period appear on the General Election ballot.

Vacancy in Office

RCW 29A.24.171

When an incumbent resigns, dies, or is disqualified mid-term, and candidate filings have not been held for the office, one of the following occurs:

- If the Elections Division is notified of a vacancy before regular candidate filing begins, the office will be included in regular filing.
- If the vacancy in office occurs on or after regular candidate filing has begun, no election is held for that office. The jurisdiction will fill the vacant position with an appointment until the next election for that office.

What if no one files for a non-partisan office? (Lapsed Elections)

RCW 29A.24.191, 201

If no candidate files during the regular filing period and subsequent special filing period, an election for the office will not be held until the next applicable election year for the office. The incumbent continues to serve until a successor is elected.

Primary Election Guidelines

Partisan Offices

**RCW 29A.52., 29A.36,
WAC 434-230-015 and 045**

A partisan office is an office for which a candidate may choose to indicate a political party preference on his or her Declaration of Candidacy. Federal, statewide, legislative and some county positions are partisan offices.
(Exceptions: Judiciary and Secretary of Education.)

A Primary Election will be held for each partisan office open for election, regardless of the number of candidates filing.

Candidates for partisan office may state a political party that he or she prefers. A candidate's preference does not indicate endorsement by the party. No changes to party preference will be accepted after the deadline for withdrawal of candidacy.

On the Primary Election ballot, candidates shall be listed in the order determined by lot.

The names of candidates for Board of County Commissioners will appear only on primary election ballots within their Commissioner district.

The two candidates who receive the greatest number of votes cast will advance to the General Election ballot regardless of party preference. They will appear on the ballot with the top vote getter appearing first.

Nonpartisan Offices
RCW 29A.52.220,
35.61.050, 36.69.090

A nonpartisan office is an office for which candidates do not indicate a party preference. All judicial and most special purpose offices are nonpartisan offices. No party preference appears on the ballot for these races.

A Primary Election will be held if three or more candidates file in any nonpartisan office, or a city, town, school, special purpose district or district court office. The two candidates with the most votes continue to the General Election. The top vote getter appears first.

A Primary Election will not be held for park and recreation district or cemetery district offices. All candidates for these offices will advance directly to the General Election ballot in lot draw order.

Candidates for Port District Commissioner will only appear on the ballots within their commissioner district in a Primary Election.

Precinct Committee Officer (PCO)
(Even years only)

Anyone who is a registered voter and a member of a major political party may become a candidate. Since voters do not register by political party in Washington, a candidate declares himself/herself to be a member of a political party at the time of filing.

Precinct Committee Officers are elected at the Primary Election.

- Only contested PCO races appear on the ballot.
- Write-in candidates for PCO are not allowed.
- If only one person files for office, they are deemed elected.
- If no one files for office, the position is filled by appointment by the political party

Term of Office and Vacancies

The term of office is two years. Should a vacancy occur in

the office (caused by death, disqualification, resignation, or failure to elect), the chairperson of the County Central Committee fills the vacancy by appointment.

Judicial Offices
State Constitution
Art. IV, Sec. 29

Judicial candidates will only appear on the Primary Election ballot when three or more candidates file for the office. The candidates' names will appear in lot draw order.

Judicial Elections in Washington State

Candidates	Municipal Court District Court Court of Appeals Supreme Court		Superior Court	
	Primary	General	Primary	General
1	No ¹	Yes ²	County population less than 100,000: No ¹	County population less than 100,000: Yes ²
			County population 100,000 or more: No because certificate of election is issued after candidate filing ³	County population 100,000 or more: No because certificate of election was issued after candidate filing ³
2	No ¹	Yes ²	No ¹	Yes ²
3 or more	Yes	Yes ²	Yes	Yes ²

¹ RCW 29A.52.220

² RCW 29A.36.170

³ Article IV, Section 29

An election to fill a vacancy in District Court may not occur in an odd-numbered year, per ALGO 1973 No. 76 and RCW 29A.04.321(1).

General Election Guidelines

Partisan Offices

On General Election ballots, the name of the candidate who, in the Primary Election, received the greatest number of votes for the position shall be listed first, followed by the name of the candidate who receives the next greatest number of votes.

Nonpartisan/Judicial Offices

RCW 29A.36.170

On General Election ballots, the name of the candidate who receives the greatest number of votes for the position in the Primary Election shall be listed first, followed by the name of the candidate who receives the next greatest number of votes.

If a Primary Election was not required for a nonpartisan office, the candidates' names will appear in lot draw order.

Political Signs

Island County Sign Regulations

Island County Code Chapter 12.24.020 prohibits the placement of unauthorized signs within the county road right-of-way, including campaign signs, without written approval of the Board of County Commissioners. All political signs placed in the road right-of-way will be considered unauthorized, unless written approval has been granted. County Public Works personnel will remove such signs. Utility poles normally lie within the road right-of-way, but near the edge. Signs should be placed beyond that distance, outside the right-of-way.

Signs removed from the right-of-way by County personnel will be kept at the respective road shops (Oak Harbor, Coupeville, Bayview and Camano) for 30 days for retrieval. Unclaimed signs will be disposed of after 30 days.

State Sign Regulations

View the link provided at the Dept. of Transportation's website: www.wsdot.wa.gov/operations/traffic

The Department of Transportation outdoor advertising representative is available to answer questions and help interpret the regulations. Call (360) 705-7296.

Complaints

Sign violation complaints do not fall under the jurisdiction of the Island County Elections Office.

To report illegal roadside signs in unincorporated Island County, contact the Public Works Dept. at 360-679-7331.

To report potential sign violations in a city or town, contact the local jurisdiction regarding regulations and requirements.

Observing the Election Process

Public Access at the Elections Office

Citizens may view ballot processing any time during the workday at the Island County Elections Office, located at 400 North Main Street in Coupeville.

Acts Prohibited in the Vicinity of a Voting Center or Ballot Deposit Site

**WAC 434-250-100,
RCW 29A.84.510, 540
RCW 9.41**

It is unlawful for a person to carry onto or possess weapons in a ballot counting center, a voting center, a student engagements hub, or the county elections and voter registration office.

During the voting period, no person may, within 100 feet from the entrance of a voting center or 25 feet from a ballot deposit site:

- Suggest, persuade or attempt to suggest or persuade any voter to vote for or against any candidate or ballot measure;
- Circulate cards or handbills of any kind;
- Solicit signatures for any kind of petition;
- Engage in any practice which interferes with the freedom of voters to exercise their franchise or disrupts administration of the voting center;
- Engage in any activities restricted under this subsection through electronic amplification located more than 100 feet from an entrance to a voting center or student engagement hub or 25 feet from an entrance to a ballot drop box if the person is capable of being understood within 100 feet of the voting center or student engagement hub or 25 feet of the ballot drop box

No person may:

- Interfere with a voter attempting to vote at a voting center or ballot drop box.
- Without lawful authority, remove any ballot from a voting center or ballot deposit site.
- Within 25 feet of a ballot drop box not located within a voting center, no person may electioneer, circulate campaign material, solicit petition signatures or interfere or impede the voting process.

Election Results
RCW 29A.60.160

Election results are available at approximately 8:30 p.m. on Election Night at the Island County Elections Office, 400 N. Main Street in Coupeville.

Elections results are also available online at:
www.islandcountywa.gov

After Election Day:

Elections Division staff will continue to verify, open, count and update results on any day when there are 500 or more ballots on hand.

Recounts

Mandatory/Automatic Recounts
RCW 29A.64

An automatic recount applies to candidates and statewide measures and will occur if less than 2,000 votes and also less than 1/2 of 1% of the votes cast for that race separate candidates or issues. The recount is applicable only to candidates apparently nominated or elected and the closest defeated opponent. The automatic recount will tally only votes for the position or measure in question and will be conducted without charge to any candidate.

For statewide elections, if the difference in the number of votes cast for the apparent winner and the closest apparently defeated opponent is less than 1,000 votes and also less than 1/4 of 1% of the total number of votes cast for both candidates, the votes shall be recounted manually.

For all other elections, if the difference in the number of votes cast for the apparent winner and the closest apparently defeated opponent is less than 150 votes and also less than 1/4 of 1% of total number of votes cast for both candidates, the votes shall be recounted manually. An alternative counting method may be used if both candidates agree in writing and the procedure is suited to the ballot system that was used for casting the votes for the office.

If a mandatory recount is required for a candidate in a jurisdiction, the costs of the recount are billed as a direct cost to the jurisdiction.

Local Measure, Question, or Issue

Automatic recounts do not apply to non-statewide ballot measures, such as levy, bond and other questions or issues.

Requested Recounts

All requested recounts must be submitted no later than two business days after the certification of the election. A deposit equal to \$.15 (machine recount) or \$.25 (manual recount) per ballot by certified check or cash is required.

Final cost of the recount will be determined by the canvassing board and may be less or more than the deposit.

Obtaining Election Data

Island County Voter Data

**RCW 29A.08.105, RCW 29A.08.710
RCW 42.56**

Following the adoption of legislation in 2023, all requests for records and reports generated by the statewide voter registration database must be submitted to and fulfilled by the Secretary of State.

This includes all voter information (voter lists, matchback files, voting history, etc.).

To contact the Secretary of State's Office, please call 360-704-5220 or email publicrecords@sos.wa.gov.

Information regarding Elections Data and Research may be found on the Secretary of State's website at:

www.sos.wa.gov/elections#data_research

State law does NOT allow telephone numbers or email addresses to be made public.

Restricted Use of Voter Data

RCW 29A.08.740

State law establishes rules and restrictions on the use of registered voter data. Voter information may not be used for commercial or other non-political purposes.

Commercial Demographic Firms

Business firms also offer various voter statistic formats and services, such as targeting, printing, designing and mailing. Options and charges for these services vary from vendor to vendor. Check sources for a variety of products, services and fees.

Resources for New Elected Officials

I won the election and have been certified the winner. What do I need to do next?

Take your oath of office RCW 29A.04.133

Candidates are elected when the General Election results have been certified. In order to become “qualified” for the office, winning candidates must take and subscribe to an oath or affirmation that you will faithfully and impartially carry out the duties of your office to the best of your ability. Candidates elected to an unexpired or short term take office upon certification of the election.

Who can administer oaths

Judges, court clerks, a notary public or any officer authorized to administer oaths. County Commissioners, the County Auditor and school or educational service district superintendents are also authorized to give oaths.

Where to obtain a blank oath of office

The Auditor’s Elections Division will send a notice of election and oath of office to the successful candidates following the certification of the election. If you do not receive it or if you need a replacement form, contact the Elections Office and we will send a replacement.

Filing your oath of office

Once the oath of office has been taken for a local or county office, the original oath must be filed with the Auditor’s Elections Office where it is filed as part of the official records for the jurisdiction. Once the oath has been filed, it becomes a public record. Elected officials may wish to complete a second original oath for retention or display purposes.

To learn more about public office

Newly elected officials may wish to contact their local city or town clerk, school superintendent as well as fellow Councilmembers and commissioners to learn more about their jurisdiction and the duties required.