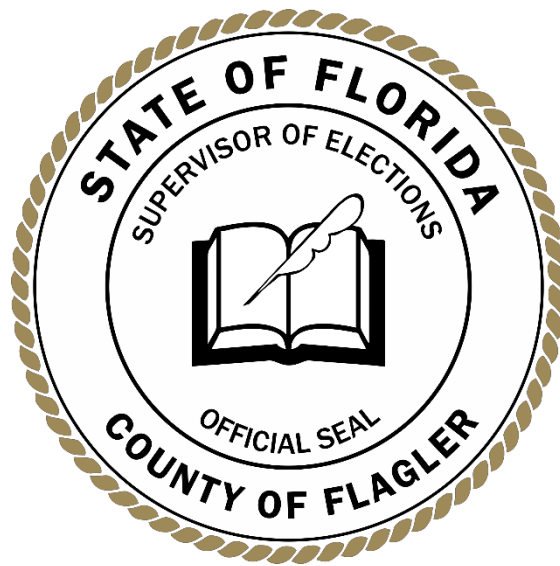


# 2026

## BECOMING A CANDIDATE IN FLAGLER COUNTY

Quick Reference Guide



*Published by:*

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**FLAGLER COUNTY SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS**

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## *A Note From Your Elections Supervisor:*

Thank you for your interest in serving your community and seeking public office in Flagler County! This quick reference guide has been designed as a resource for potential candidates. I hope this information will help you make the best decisions as you navigate the campaign trail.

The information contained in this guide is based on the election laws that were in effect at the time of its publication. Laws are subject to change. Please refer to the most current election laws online:

<https://dos.fl.gov/elections/laws-rules/law-resources/>

**As a candidate, it is your responsibility to read, understand, and comply with Florida law.**

This reference guide is NOT a substitute for Florida election law. If you choose to seek public office, it is your responsibility to understand the requirements. Upon filing, you will be provided a Flagler County Candidate Handbook, published by this office, and a printed copy of the *Candidate and Campaign Treasurer Handbook*, published by the Division of Elections. It is strongly recommended that you study Chapter 106, F.S. and the *Candidate and Campaign Treasurer Handbook* available here:

[https:// dos.fl.gov/elections/forms-publications/publications/](https://dos.fl.gov/elections/forms-publications/publications/)

It is truly an honor to serve you! Please know you are always welcome to call or visit the Elections Office if you have questions about candidate qualifying. We are here to help!

Sincerely,

*Kaiti Lenhart*

SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS

## 2026 ELECTION DATES

ELECTION	ELECTION DAY	REGISTRATION DEADLINE
Primary	August 18, 2026	July 20, 2026
General	November 3, 2026	October 6, 2026

## ON THE BALLOT IN 2026

The following offices will qualify with the Flagler County Supervisor of Elections:

### County & Special District Offices

- County Commissioner, Districts 2 & 4
- School Board Member, Districts 1, 2 & 4
- Deer Run Community Development District Seats 1 & 2
- Dunes Community Development District, Seats 1 & 5
- Grand Haven Community Development District, Seats 1, 3 & 5
- Hunters Ridge Community Development District, Seats 1 & 5
- Palm Coast Park Community Development District, Seats 1 & 3
- Tomoka Community Development District, Seats 3, 4 & 5
- Town Center at Palm Coast Community Development District, Seats 1 & 3

## RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

<b>County Commission</b> Partisan Office, Term 4 Years	<b>School Board</b> Nonpartisan Office, Term 4 Years	<b>Special District</b> Nonpartisan Office, Term 4 Years
Candidates must reside in the district for which they are qualifying at the time of the election in November.	Candidates must reside in the district for which they are qualifying at the time of assuming office.	Candidates must reside in the district for which they are qualifying at the time of qualifying.

Per FS 99.021 and DE 94-04, March 3, 1994 Opinion from the Division of Elections / Qualifications for Selected Offices Must Be Met; Residency, DE 78-31, DE 92-10 & DE 94-04.

\* Advisory Opinion to the Governor, 192 So. 2d 757 (Fla. 1966); Ops. Div. Elect. 78-31 (August 3, 1978), and 92-10 (June 24, 1992).

## DEFINITIONS

<b>Filing Officer</b>	The election official to whom a candidate submits their qualifying papers and campaign reports: for county-wide offices, the filing officer is the Flagler County Supervisor of Elections; for multi-county, state or federal offices, the filing officer is the Florida Department of State (F.S. 99.061). Municipal candidates file with their City Clerk.
<b>In-Kind Contribution</b>	A gift of goods, services, or anything having attributable monetary value to a campaign, the value of which is determined by the person making the contribution (F.S. 106.011, 106.055).
<b>Non-Partisan Office</b>	An office for which a candidate is prohibited from campaigning or qualifying for an election or retention in office based on party affiliation (F.S. 97.021).
<b>Petition Process</b>	A method of qualifying for office that requires obtaining a pre-determined number of voter signatures on petitions (F.S. 99.095).
<b>Political Advertisement</b>	A paid expression in any communications media, whether radio, television, newspaper, magazine, periodical, campaign literature, direct mail or display or by means other than the spoken word in direct conversation, which supports or opposes any candidate, elected public official or issue (F.S. 106.011).
<b>Qualifying Period</b>	The dates set by law during which the final paperwork and a qualifying fee (if required) are filed with the candidate's filing officer (F.S. 99.061).

## WHAT IS A CANDIDATE?

A candidate is defined in 97.021(4) & 106.011(16), Florida Statutes, as any person who:

- Seeks to qualify for nomination or election by means of a petitioning process;
- Seeks to qualify for election as a write-in candidate;
- Receives contributions or makes expenditures or gives his or her consent for any other person to receive contributions or make expenditures with a view to bringing about his or her nomination or election to, or retention in, public office;
- Appoints a treasurer and designates a primary depository; or
- Files qualification papers and subscribes to a candidate's oath as required by law.

## WHO CAN BE A CANDIDATE?

Candidates for county and special district offices must be registered voters in Flagler County. Those seeking a partisan office may not have been a registered member of any other political party, including those running under No Party Affiliation (NPA), for 365 days before the beginning of qualifying preceding the General Election for which the person seeks to qualify (Deadline: June 8, 2025).



If required, one's current position or office must be resigned under the "resign to run" law and in accordance with section 99.012(3), Florida Statutes.

## PRE-FILING FORMS

Candidates can file their DS-DE 9 and DS-DE 84 at any time before qualifying week. Nothing prohibits a person from announcing his or her intention to become a candidate prior to filing a Form DS-DE 9, as long as no contributions and expenditures have been made and a bank account has not been opened.

### Form DS-DE 9, Appointment of Campaign Treasurer and Designation of Campaign Depository

- MUST be filed with the filing officer prior to opening the campaign banking account.
- DO NOT collect contributions or make expenditures until the form is filed.
- This form is not effective until fully completed, signed and filed with the filing officer.
- This form is not considered "filed" upon mailing.

*Exception:* Special district candidates who do not collect contributions and whose only expense is the signature verification fee for the petition method or qualifying fee are not required to file the DS-DE-9 [99.061(3)].



**DO NOT OPEN YOUR CAMPAIGN BANK ACCOUNT UNTIL YOU FILE THE DS-DE 9 FORM WITH OUR OFFICE!**

## QUALIFYING BY PETITION METHOD

Local and judicial candidates will need **968** valid signatures.  
Special district candidates will need **25** valid signatures.



A signature verification fee of \$0.10 (ten cents) per petition must be paid in advance when submitting petitions for verification. The candidate will receive a certification once petition requirements have been met. The petition certification is required during the official qualifying period. Write-in candidates are not required to collect petitions or pay a qualifying fee.

### PETITION SUBMISSION DEADLINE:

Candidates for local office must submit the required number of valid petitions to the Supervisor of Elections prior to **NOON on May 11, 2026**.

***Do not wait until the last minute to submit petitions!***

**It is recommended that you plan to collect more petitions than the requirement and submit them to the Elections Office in batches.** We will verify the petitions and provide a running total for each batch as they are submitted. Candidates who fail to qualify by the petition method will be required to pay the qualifying fee.

## QUALIFYING BY FEE

Any candidate who does not obtain a Petition Certification in May 2026, must pay the qualifying fee to the Supervisor of Elections by the end of the qualifying period. The total amount of the fee is based upon a percentage of the annual salary of the office sought. A filing fee of 3% and an election assessment fee of 1% must be paid by all candidates who qualify by fee method for county office. Partisan candidates pay an additional 2% party assessment fee. Special districts pay \$25.00. Write-in candidates pay no fee and are not required to obtain the petition certification.

**A properly executed check drawn on the candidate's campaign account listed on the DS-DE 9 and signed by the campaign treasurer must be used to pay the qualifying fee.**

## What's My Qualifying Fee?

6% of annual salary	4% of annual salary	\$25	\$0
Partisan candidates for partisan offices	Nonpartisan candidates for partisan office and all nonpartisan offices	Special district offices	Write-in candidates for any office

## QUALIFYING PERIODS

Candidates for county offices and special districts must file their qualifying paperwork and pay the qualifying fee (if required) at the Supervisor of Elections Office in Bunnell, Florida. If mailed, items required for qualifying **must be received** by the end of the qualifying period.

### LOCAL CANDIDATES QUALIFYING PERIOD (Excluding County Judge):

**When:** Between Noon, June 08, 2026 – Noon, June 12, 2026  
Qualifying papers will be accepted beginning Tuesday, May 26, 2026, pursuant to Section 99.061(8), F.S.

**Where:** Supervisor of Elections Office, Government Services Building,  
1769 E. Moody Boulevard, Building 2, Suite 101, Bunnell, FL 32110

## WHAT DO I NEED TO FILE DURING QUALIFYING?

Pursuant to Section 99.061(7), Florida Statutes, all items required for qualifying must be received in a CORRECT and COMPLETE order by the end of the qualifying period; otherwise, you will not be deemed a qualified candidate. The following items must be received by the Supervisor of Elections no later than the end of the qualifying period at noon on June 12, 2026.

1	2	3	4	5
Appointment of Campaign Treasurer and Depository	Statement of Candidate	Loyalty Oath	Financial Disclosure	PETITIONS or FEE
<b>FORM DS-DE 9</b> <b>Must be filed before:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opening bank account</li> <li>Accepting contributions or making expenditures for the campaign</li> <li>Collecting signed candidate petitions for verification</li> </ol>	<b>FORM DS-DE 84</b> Due within 10 calendar days of filing form DS-DE 9 You must file within the 10-day period, which includes weekends and legal holidays.	Depending upon party affiliation and the type of office, file one of these forms: <b>DS-DE 301SL</b> <b>DS-DE 302NP</b> <b>DS-DE 304SB</b>	Full and Public Disclosure of Financial Interests for the year 2025, either Form 1 or 6, depending upon the office sought <b>FORM 1</b> (special districts) <b>FORM 6</b> (county offices) Available here: <a href="http://ethics.state.fl.us">http://ethics.state.fl.us</a>	<b>PETITION CERTIFICATION</b> Issued by SOE The petition submission deadline is May 11, 2026, at Noon. <b>OR</b> <b>QUALIFYING FEE</b> Check drawn on the campaign bank account for the correct amount
These cannot be accepted until the qualifying period.				

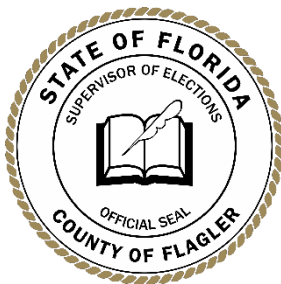
*Exception:* Special district candidates who do not collect contributions and whose only expense is the signature verification fee or filing fee are not required to file the DS-DE-9 [99.061(3)]. Instead, they will need to complete an Affidavit of Intent.

Thank You

*Thank you for your interest in running for office in Flagler County!*

**Please call or stop by the Elections Office if you have questions. We are here to help.**

★ ★ ★ *Freedom Rings with Every Vote* ★ ★ ★



***Kaiti Lenhart***

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