

2026 Jurisdiction Manual



A letter from the Director

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for partnering with King County Elections to help voters make important decisions about their communities.

This 2026 Jurisdiction Manual contains information you'll need as a jurisdiction administrator, including key election dates and deadlines, requirements for filing ballot measures, and detailed information about the jurisdiction's role and responsibilities.

Take a look at upcoming deadlines and update your calendars. We intend for this Manual to serve as a resource today, and throughout the year.

Additional tools for jurisdictions, candidates, and voters are available on our website at kingcounty.gov/elections. Please don't hesitate to reach out to our team at 206-296-1565 if you have any questions or would like additional information. We're here to help.

In Partnership,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Wise". The script is fluid and cursive.

Julie Wise, Director
King County Elections

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Legend

-  This symbol denotes important deadlines.
-  This symbol denotes general information.
-  This symbol denotes important information.
-  This symbol denotes contact information.



Information contained in the Jurisdiction Manual is subject to change. Consult the online manual for the most updated information.



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2026 Election Calendar

Important election dates and deadlines.

chapter 01

Election dates

Upon receipt of a resolution from the governing body of a jurisdiction, King County Elections may hold a special election. The jurisdiction can request the special election be held on one of the following dates:

- February 10, 2026
- April 28, 2026
- August 4, 2026
- November 3, 2026

Submission deadlines

The resolution requesting the special election must be presented to King County Elections as follows:

- February election: December 12, 2025
- April election: February 27, 2026
- Primary election: May 1, 2026
- General election: August 4, 2026

All resolutions must be received by King County Elections no later than 4:30 p.m. on the day of the deadline.

Offices in the general election

Even-numbered years are when federal, state, legislative and some judicial offices appear on the general election ballot.

Odd-numbered years are when county, port, some judicial, city, school and special purpose district offices appear on the general election ballot.

February 10, 2026 Special Election Calendar

December 2025	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5	6
	7	8	9	10	11	12 Last day to file for the February special election Explanatory statement & committee appointment form due	13
	14	15	16 Pro/con statements due	17	18 Pro/con rebuttal statements due	19	20
	21	22 Voters' pamphlet proofs sent	23	24 Voters' pamphlet proof response due	25 Elections office closed in observance of Christmas	26	27
	28	29	30	31			

January	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Elections office closed in observance of New Year's Day	2	3
	4	5	6	7	8	9 Overseas, service, and out of state ballots mailed Online voter guide available Ballot tracker available	10
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	18	19 Elections office closed in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day	20	21 Ballots & Voters' pamphlets mailed Vote center opens	22 Ballot drop boxes open	23	24
	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February 10, 2026 Special Election Calendar (continued)

February	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 Deadline for mail/ online voter registrations & transfers RCW 29A.08.140	3	4	5	6	7
	8	9	10 Election Day	11	12	13	14
	15	16 Elections office closed in observance of President's Day	17	18	19	20 Election certification RCW 29A.60.190	21
	22	23	24 Deadline to file application for recount RCW 29A.64.011	25	26	27	28

April 28, 2026 Special Election Calendar

February	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	15	16 Elections office closed in observance of President's Day	17	18	19	20 Last day to file for the April special election Explanatory statement & committee appointment form due	21
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28

March	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 Pro/con statements due	4	5 Pro/con rebuttal statements due	6	7
	8	9	10	11	12	13 Voters' pamphlet proofs sent	14
	15	16 Voters' pamphlet proof response due	17	18	19	20	21
	22	23	24	25	26	27 Overseas, service, and out of state ballots mailed Online voter guide available Ballot tracker available	28
	29	30	31				

April 28, 2026 Special Election Calendar (continued)

April	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3	4
	5	6	7	8 Ballots & Voters' pamphlets mailed Vote center opens	9 Ballot drop boxes open	10	11
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	19	20 Deadline for mail/ online voter registrations & transfers RCW 29A.08.140	21	22	23	24	25
	26	27	28 Election Day	29	30		

May	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1	2
	3	4	5	6	7	8 Election certification RCW 29A.60.190	9
	10	11	12 Deadline to file application for recount RCW 29A.64.011	13	14	15	16
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	24	25 Elections office closed in observance of Memorial Day	26	27	28	29	30
	31						

August 4, 2026 Primary Election Calendar

May	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Last day to file for the primary election RCW 29A.04.330 Committee appointment form due	2
	3	4	5 Explanatory statements due	6	7	8	9
		Candidate filing RCW 29A.24.050					
	10	11 Last day for candidates to withdraw RCW 29A.24.131	12 Pro/con statements due	13	14 Pro/con rebuttal statements due	15	16
	17	18	19 Candidate statements due	20	21	22	23
	24	25 Elections office closed in observance of Memorial Day	26	27	28	29	30
	31						

June	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5	6
	7	8	9	10	11	12 Voters' pamphlet proofs sent	13
	14	15 Voters' pamphlet proof response due	16	17	18	19 Overseas, service, and out of state ballots mailed Online voter guide available Ballot tracker available	20
	21	22	23	24	25	26 Elections office closed in observance of Juneteenth	27
	28	29	30				

August 4, 2026 Primary Election Calendar (continued)

July	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3 Elections office closed in observance of Independence Day	4
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	12	13	14 Voters' pamphlet mailed to all residential households in King County	15 Ballots mailed Vote center opens	16 Ballot drop boxes open	17	18
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	26	27 Deadline for mail/online voter registrations & transfers RCW 29A.08.140	28	29	30	31	

August	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
							1 Additional vote centers open
	2	3	4 Election Day	5	6	7	8
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	16	17	18 Election certification RCW 29A.60.190	19	20 Deadline to file application for recount RCW 29A.64.011	21	22
	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	30	31					

November 3, 2026 General Election Calendar

August	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
							1
	2	3	4 Last day to file for the general election RCW 29A.04.330 Committee appointment form due	5	6	7 Explanatory statement due Candidate statements due	8
	9	10	11 Pro/con statements due	12	13 Pro/con rebuttal statements due	14	15
	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	30	31					

September	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4 Voters' pamphlet proofs sent	5
	6	7 Elections office closed in observance of Labor Day	8 Voters' pamphlet proof response due	9	10	11	12
	13	14	15	16	17	18 Overseas, service, and out of state ballots mailed Online voter guide available Ballot tracker available	19
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	27	28	29	30			

November 3, 2026 General Election Calendar (continued)

October	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2	3
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	11	12 Elections office closed in observance of Indigenous Peoples' Day	13 Voters' pamphlets mailed to all residential households in King County	14 Ballots mailed Vote center opens	15 Ballot drop boxes open	16	17
	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	25	26 Deadline for mail/online voter registrations & transfers RCW 29A.08.140	27	28	29	30	31 Additional vote centers open

November	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 Election Day	4	5	6	7
	8	9	10	11 Elections office closed in observance of Veterans Day	12	13	14
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	22	23	24 Election certification RCW 29A.60.190	25	26 Elections office closed in observance of Thanksgiving	27 Elections office closed in observance of Native American Heritage Day	28
	29	30					

Jurisdiction Survey

Confirming office holder information for candidate filing.

chapter 02

Purpose of the Jurisdiction Survey

The Jurisdiction Survey is sent to all jurisdiction administrators each year to confirm office holder information. King County Elections uses the office holder information to properly conduct candidate filings for each office.

Completing the Jurisdiction Survey

Typically around January 15 but no later than February 1 of each year, King County Elections sends an email with instructions regarding the Jurisdiction Survey. Administrators must provide the following information when completing the survey:

- Current contact information for the jurisdiction administrator
- Current contact information for the finance department (to be used to contact the jurisdiction for election billing purposes)
- Information about the current elected officials (office title, position number, office holder's name, annual salary at the time of candidate filing, term expiration)
- Current contact information for the city manager or city administrator, if applicable.

Jurisdiction administrators must complete the survey prior to March 1 so that the filing information can be compiled and disseminated to the public at least 30 days prior to the candidate filing period.

Frequently Asked Questions

What if an office becomes vacant or there is a new appointment after I have submitted the Jurisdiction Survey?

You need to notify King County Elections in writing once an office becomes vacant.

Prior to appointing a new person, email a list of potential appointees to King County Elections. Our staff will verify whether or not they are qualified registered voters for that office.

Once a new official is appointed to that office, you will need to notify our office in writing of the new appointment.

Where do I get the oath of office for a new appointee?

King County Elections does not create or send out oaths of office for elected or appointed officials. Jurisdictions must provide their officials with an oath of office.

It is up to each jurisdiction to determine whether or not they need to send the oath of office for your newly appointed official to the King County Recorder's Office. There will be a charge to record the oath if you do choose to send it to the King County Recorder's Office.

Do not return the oath of office to King County Elections.



King County Recorder's Office

206-477-6620

kcrocust@kingcounty.gov

kingcounty.gov/records

Office Holders

Information about your current office holders, resignations, appointments and oaths of office.

chapter 03

Importance of keeping King County Elections informed

It is extremely important that King County Elections has accurate, up-to-date information regarding current office holders, as this information is used to determine which offices are subject to election. Our office must be notified immediately of all vacancies and appointments that occur throughout the year.

Resignations

Once an office becomes vacant, notify our office immediately. Notification must be in writing; an email is sufficient. Please include the name of the office holder, the position number and effective date of the resignation. Additional information can be found about vacancies in [RCW 42.12](#).

New appointments

Prior to appointing an individual to fill a vacancy, our staff must verify that the potential appointee is a registered voter of the jurisdiction. The list of appointees with a date of birth and/or residential address can be emailed and our staff will confirm their registration.

Once the registration status has been confirmed and an individual has been appointed, notify our office of the appointment. Again, the notification must be in writing and an email is sufficient. Please include the name of the appointed person, residential address for that person, and the effective date of the appointment.

Oaths of office

Every person elected to an office in the State of Washington is required by state and federal constitutions to take an oath prior to serving in office. Information on when regular terms begin for elected officials, how oaths must be administered and how oaths must be retained can be found in the chart on the next page.

King County Elections does not create or send an oath of office for office holders. It is the jurisdiction's responsibility to provide their officials with an oath of office.

It is up to each jurisdiction to determine whether or not they need to send the completed oath of office to the King County Recorder's Office. There will be a charge to record the oath if you do choose to send it to the Recorder's Office. Do not send the oath of office to King County Elections.



King County Recorder's Office
206-477-6620
kcrocust@kingcounty.gov
kingcounty.gov/records

Office	Regular term begins	Administration and repository of oath	Citations
County officials Executive officers	January 1	No earlier than 10 days prior to assuming office, or at last regularly scheduled meeting. Oath retained by County Auditor.	RCW 29A.60.280 RCW 36.16.040, 060
District Court judges	Second Monday in January	Prior to entering the duties of office	RCW 3.34.070 RCW 3.34.080
City and town officials Executive officers	January 1	No earlier than 10 days prior to assuming office, or at last regularly scheduled meeting. Oath filed with the County Auditor.	RCW 29A.60.270, 280 RCW 35.27.120 RCW 35.23.081 RCW 35A.12.040, 080 RCW 35A.13.160
Municipal Court judges	Second Monday in January	Prior to entering the duties of office	RCW 35.20.150
Port District commissioners	January 1	No earlier than 10 days prior to assuming office, or at last regularly scheduled meeting.	RCW 29A.60.270, 280 RCW 53.12.172
School directors	Begins at first official meeting following certification of election	School officials are authorized to administer all oaths or affirmations. Retained by County Auditor.	RCW 28A.343.360
Fire Protection District commissioners	January 1	No earlier than 10 days prior to assuming office, or at last regularly scheduled meeting. Retained by County Auditor.	RCW 29A.60.270, 280 RCW 52.14.070, 080
Sewer, Water and Hospital District commissioners	January 1	No earlier than 10 days prior to assuming office, or at last regularly scheduled meeting.	RCW 29A.60.270, 280 RCW 57.12.030 RCW 70.44.040
Cemetery District commissioners	January 1	No earlier than 10 days prior to assuming office, or at last regularly scheduled meeting. Retained by County Auditor.	RCW 29A.60.270, 280 RCW 68.52.260

Park and Recreation District commissioners	January 1	No earlier than 10 days prior to assuming office, or at last regularly scheduled meeting. Retained by County Auditor.	RCW 35.61.050
Jurisdictions requiring land ownership (e.g. diking/flood control districts)	Upon certification of election	No statutory reference available	RCW 85.24.070 RCW 85.38.070 RCW 86.09.301

Voids and lapses

A void in candidacy occurs when no valid declarations of candidacy have been filed for a position, or all candidates that did file a valid declaration of candidacy have withdrawn, died or been disqualified.

If a void in candidacy occurs after the regular candidate filing period, but before the primary election day, a special three day candidate filing period will be held. The date of the special filing period will be determined by King County Elections. Notice of the void in candidacy will be given and include the time and place for individuals to file a declaration of candidacy.

All candidates that file a valid declaration of candidacy during the special candidate filing period will appear on the general election ballot. A primary election will not be held for that office. The candidate receiving the most votes for that office in the general election is deemed elected.

If after the regular and special candidate filing periods have passed and no candidate has filed a valid declaration of candidacy, the election for that office is deemed lapsed and the office will not appear on the ballot.

If a lapse of election occurs, the current office holder will remain in office and continue to serve until the next succeeding general election that the office is allowed by law to have an election.

Vacancies

When a vacancy in office occurs, certain factors determine when the office will appear on the general election ballot; such as the date the vacancy occurs and whether the office was scheduled for election that year.

If, prior to the first day of the regular candidate filing period, a vacancy occurs in an office that is not scheduled to appear on the general election ballot, valid declarations of candidacy for that office will be accepted during the regular candidate filing period. King County Elections will give notice of the vacancy, and the notice will include the date, time, and place for filing declarations of candidacy.

If, on the first day of the regular candidate filing period or later, a vacancy occurs in an office that is not scheduled to appear on the general election ballot, then declarations of candidacy will not be accepted for that office during the regular



Voids in candidacy to require a special filing period

General Election: May 12 to August 3, 2026



Deadline for vacancies to appear on the ballot

On or before May 3, 2026

candidate filing period. That office will instead occur at the next succeeding general election that the office is allowed by law to have an election.



Examples

John Smith, a state legislative representative, resigns on April 1, 2026. His position was not scheduled for election until 2028, leaving an unexpired 2-year term. Since the vacancy occurred before the first day of the regular candidate filing period, declarations of candidacy will be accepted for that office and it will appear on the general election ballot.

Jane Jones, a district court judge, resigns on July 31, 2026. Her position was not scheduled for election until 2028. Since the regular candidate filing period has passed, this office will not appear on the general election ballot. This office will appear on the 2028 general election ballot as a short and full term. Declarations of candidacy will be accepted during the regular candidate filing period in 2028.

Candidate Filing

Information about your role during candidate filing and general filing guidelines.

chapter 04

Your role during candidate filing

Jurisdiction administrators are not active participants in the candidate filing process. All candidates are responsible for submitting their own declaration of candidacy. Jurisdiction resources should not be used to assist an elected official or candidate to file for office.

Candidate filing

All persons wishing to have their name printed on the ballot for election to office must file a valid declaration of candidacy. Any person filing a declaration of candidacy must meet the qualifications specified by law for that office at the time of filing the declaration of candidacy. The candidate must be a registered voter of the jurisdiction for which they are filing, which is verified by King County Elections. It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that they meet any and all other requirements for the office.

For offices with an annual salary greater than \$1,000, a filing fee equal to 1% of the annual salary must accompany the declaration of candidacy at the time of filing. A filing fee is not charged for any office that is compensated on a per diem or per meeting basis.

Filing fees are not refundable. If a candidate withdraws their declaration of candidacy, they forfeit the filing fee.

Filing fees are not transferable. If a candidate withdraws their declaration of candidacy and refiles for a different position a second filing fee must be paid for the new position.

The candidate filing period begins the first Monday in May and ends the following Friday.

Withdrawal of candidacy

Candidates may withdraw their declaration of candidacy prior to the deadline to withdraw.

There is no withdrawal period for declarations of candidacy filed during special candidate filing periods.

No filing fees will be refunded to any candidate that withdraws.



Candidate filing deadlines

Mail

April 20 - May 8, 5:00 p.m., regardless of postmark

In-person

May 4, 8:00 a.m. - May 8, 5:00 p.m.

Online

May 4, 8:00 a.m. - May 8, 5:00 p.m.



Deadline to Withdraw Candidacy

May 11, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.

Write-in candidates

If an individual wishes to file for an office after the candidate filing period has passed, they must file a declaration of write-in candidacy and pay the filing fee, if any. Declarations of write-in candidacy must be received by 8 p.m. on the primary or general election day. Declarations of write-in candidacy received after this date, regardless of the postmark, cannot be accepted. Candidates that file 19 days prior to election day or earlier do not have to pay a filing fee.



Deadline to file as write-in candidate

Primary Election: August 4, 2026, at 8 p.m.

- Deadline to file without paying a filing fee: July 16, 2026, at 4:30 p.m.

General Election: November 3, 2026, at 8 p.m.

- Deadline to file without paying a filing fee: October 15, 2026, at 4:30 p.m.

Residency Requirements

All candidates must be a registered voter of the jurisdiction for which they have filed a declaration of candidacy. It is the candidate’s responsibility to ensure they meet any and all other requirements.

No double filings

A candidate cannot file for more than one office appearing on the ballot, with the exception of filing as a Precinct Committee Officer.

Shared districts

Below are the districts that are shared by more than one county. The primary county issues certificates of election and accepts declarations of candidacy for that jurisdiction.

Jurisdictions	Counties that share the district
Judicial districts	
King County Southeast Electoral District Court	Pierce (City of Auburn portion only)
Cities	
Auburn	Pierce
Bothell	Snohomish
Milton	Pierce*
Pacific	Pierce
School districts	
Auburn School District No. 408	Pierce
Fife School District No. 417	Pierce*
Northshore School District No. 417	Snohomish

Jurisdictions	Counties that share the district
Special purpose districts	
East Pierce Fire & Rescue	Pierce*
King County Rural Library District	Pierce, Snohomish
Pierce County Rural Library District	Pierce*
Snoqualmie Pass Fire and Rescue	Kittitas*
Snoqualmie Pass Utility District	Kittitas*
Sound Transit	Pierce & Snohomish
Stevens Pass Sewer District	Chelan
Valley Regional Fire Authority	Pierce

* indicates primary county

Resolution Filing

Information about filing a resolution to place a measure on the ballot and ballot titles.

Deadlines for requesting to place a measure on the ballot

Upon receipt of a resolution from the governing body of a jurisdiction, King County Elections may hold a special election. The jurisdiction can request the special election be held on one of the following dates:

- February 10, 2026
- April 28, 2026
- August 4, 2026
- November 3, 2026

The resolution requesting the special election must be presented to King County Elections as follows:

- February election: December 12, 2025
- April election: February 27, 2026
- Primary election: May 1, 2026
- General election: August 4, 2026

All resolutions must be received by King County Elections no later than 4:30 p.m. on the day of the deadline.

Filing a resolution

Resolutions can be submitted to King County Elections by email, mail, fax or in-person.

A [ballot measure submission cover sheet](#) is required for each resolution being submitted. The cover sheet is available on our website.

Resolution deadlines

Resolutions must be submitted to King County Elections no later than 4:30 p.m. on the following dates:

Election date	Resolution Deadline	Withdrawal deadline
February 10, 2026	December 12, 2025	December 12, 2025
April 28, 2026	February 27, 2026	February 27, 2026
August 4, 2026	May 1, 2026	May 11, 2026
November 3, 2026	August 4, 2026	August 18, 2026
February 9, 2027	December 11, 2026	December 11, 2026

Withdrawing a resolution

If a jurisdiction wishes to withdraw a submitted resolution, a new resolution withdrawing the previously submitted resolution must be submitted to King County Elections. Alternatively, the jurisdiction could add withdrawal language to the submitted resolution (Example: If Proposition No. 1 passes in the primary election, this resolution #___ shall be withdrawn). If the withdrawal language exists in the resolution language and the earlier measure will pass in the preceding election, submitting an additional withdrawal is not necessary. If the withdrawal language exists in the resolution language and the earlier measure is failing in the preceding election, the jurisdiction will still need to submit a withdrawal to be removed from the upcoming election. For specific withdrawal dates and deadlines, please consult the Resolution deadline chart.

Ballot titles

Ballot titles consist of three elements: ballot caption (name of jurisdiction and a statement of the subject matter); a concise description of the measure; and a question. The concise description must not exceed seventy-five words.

The ballot title is prepared by the Prosecuting Attorney's Office, with the exception of ballot titles for a city or town which are prepared by the city attorney.

King County Elections will send an order of election containing the official ballot title to the jurisdiction.

Appealing a ballot title

Within ten business days of a ballot title being filed, any persons dissatisfied with the ballot title may file a petition with the superior court to appeal the ballot title. The date the ballot title is filed is the date that the ballot title was first filed with King County Elections. The decision of the superior court is final. More information about appealing a ballot title can be found in [RCW 29A.36.090](#).

Ballot Order

Information about the order in which candidates and measures appear on the ballot.

chapter 06

Ballot order

State law determines the order of offices and measures on the ballot at the federal or state level. For local offices and measures, the order they appear on the ballot is established by the county.

Order of offices

The offices will appear in the following order:

- Federal Offices
 - President and Vice President of the United States
 - United States Senator
 - United States Representative
- State Offices
 - Governor
 - Lieutenant Governor
 - Secretary of State
 - State Treasurer
 - State Auditor
 - Attorney General
 - Commissioner of Public Lands
 - Superintendent of Public Instruction
 - Insurance Commissioner
 - State Senator
 - State Representative
- County Offices
 - County Executive
 - Prosecuting Attorney
 - Assessor
 - Director of Elections
 - County Council
- State and County Judicial Offices. These appear on the ballot sequentially by district and/or position within each category.
 - Justices of the Supreme Court
 - Judges of the Court of Appeals
 - Judges of the Superior Court
 - Judges of the District Court
- Countywide Special Purpose Districts
 - Port of Seattle
- Cities and Towns
 - Mayor
 - City Attorney
 - Other elective department positions
 - Council
 - Municipal Court Judge
- Special Purpose Districts. Directors or commissioners within each district shall be in the order of the position or director district numbers assigned to those offices.
 - Regional districts that are not countywide
 - Transportation
 - School
 - Fire
 - Water
 - Sewer
 - Sewer and water combined
 - Public hospital
 - Airport
 - Cemetery
 - Park and Recreation Districts
 - Park and Recreation Service Areas
 - Flood, Drainage or related districts
 - Community Municipal Corporations

Order of measures

The measures will appear on the ballot in the following order:

- Initiatives to the people
- Referendum measures
- Referendum bills
- Initiatives to the Legislature and alternate proposals, if any
- Proposed Constitutional amendments
 - Senate Joint Resolutions
 - House Joint Resolutions
- Countywide ballot measures

All other local measures, if any, appear in the area dedicated to that jurisdiction and follow the offices. For example, a ballot measure for a city would appear on the ballot after the city council races. Local measures would appear in the following order:

- Initiatives
- Referendum measures
- Proposed charter amendments
- All other propositions

Measures are numbered sequentially within each of the above categories in the order they are received by King County Elections, unless otherwise indicated by the jurisdiction proposing the measures.

Order of candidates

After the close of the regular candidate filing period, King County Elections will conduct a lot draw to determine the order in which candidate names will appear on the primary election ballot.

For the general election ballot, the candidate receiving the most votes in the primary election will appear first and the candidate receiving the second highest number of votes will appear second. If a primary election is not required for an office, the candidate names will appear on the general election ballot in the order determined by the lot draw.

Validation Rates

General information about validation rates and how they are calculated.

chapter 07

Bond and levy election validations

Passing a levy or bond issue is not always a simple matter of majority rules. State law requires bond issues and some types of levies to have a supermajority in order to pass; other levies, such as a levy lid lift, only require a simple majority.

Levy validation for school districts

A school district levy requires a simple majority to pass.

Levy validation (excluding school levies)

Non-school district levies have two thresholds that must be met in order for the levy to pass: (1) the levy must receive a minimum 60% majority, and (2) a minimum number of “Yes” votes must be cast, which is determined by calculating 60% of 40% of the number of voters in the jurisdiction that cast ballots in the previous general election.

Levy validation (not school) example:

If there were 10,000 votes cast in the last general election for the district:

$$10,000 \times 40\% = 4,000$$

$$4,000 \times 60\% = 2,400$$

To pass the levy, the district must have at least 2,400 yes votes, even if only a total of 2,500 people voted on the levy.

Bond validation

Bond issues also have two thresholds that must be met in order for the bond to pass: (1) the bond must receive a minimum 60% majority, and (2) the voter turnout for that jurisdiction must equal 40% of the voters who cast ballots in the previous general election.

Bond validation example:

If there were 10,000 votes cast in the last general election for the district:

$$10,000 \times 40\% = 4,000$$

To pass the bond issue, the district must have at least a 60% “Yes” vote and a minimum turnout of at least 4,000 voters.

Validation summary

Following certification of the general election each year, King County Elections will notify all jurisdictions that the [validation summary](#) is available on our website.

The validation summary contains information compiled from the general election and includes the following statistics for each jurisdiction:

- The total number of “active registered voters” at the time of the general election
 - “Active registered voters” does not include voters who are inactive due to the return of non-deliverable of official documents such as a mail ballot or voter registration card.
- The number of votes cast for the general election

If a jurisdiction is shared with another county, you will need to add that county's figures to get the total number needed for validation.

Local Voters' Pamphlet

Information on how to publish a local voters' pamphlet, explanatory statements and pro/con committees.

chapter 08

Local voters' pamphlet

King County publishes a local voters' pamphlet for each election. All jurisdictions requesting a measure be placed on the ballot are automatically included in the local voters' pamphlet.

The jurisdiction does not need to specifically request a local voters' pamphlet in a resolution submitted to King County Elections. The jurisdiction must pay for the costs of publishing the local voters' pamphlet. More information on the duty to print and distribute the local voters' pamphlet can be found in [RCW 29A.32.210](#).

The primary county accepts committee appointment forms, explanatory statements, and statements submitted by the pro and con committees. Districts shared by more than one county can be found on [page 21](#).

Jurisdiction's responsibility - appointing committee members

The jurisdiction is responsible for appointing pro and con committees to prepare statements in favor of and in opposition to the ballot measure. Pro and con committees consist of members of the public who commit to write a statement either in favor of or in opposition to a ballot measure. Each committee member must reside in the district. Each committee is limited to three members, but the committee can have an unlimited number of persons assist them to prepare the statements. Each committee must designate a spokesperson with whom King County Elections will communicate all matters related to the local voters' pamphlet.

Once the committee members have been chosen, the jurisdiction must complete the Committee



Local voters' pamphlet deadlines

Special elections

Election date	February 10	April 28
Pro/Con Committee Appointments	12/12/25	2/27/26
Explanatory Statement	12/12/25	2/27/26
Pro/Con Statements	12/16/25	3/3/26
Rebuttal Statements	12/18/25	3/5/26

Primary and general elections

Election date	August 4	November 3
Pro/Con Committee Appointments	5/1/26	8/4/26
Explanatory Statement	5/5/26	8/7/26
Pro/Con Statements	5/12/26	8/11/26
Rebuttal Statements	5/14/26	8/13/26

Note: A resolution requesting a local voters' pamphlet is not required. Local voters' pamphlets are automatically produced for all elections.

Appointment Form which is included in the [Local Voters' Pamphlet Packet](#) and submit it to King County Elections by 4:30 p.m. on the day of the deadline.

The jurisdiction is also responsible for informing the committee members of the deadlines and rules related to the voters' pamphlet statements. King County Elections provides a packet of information for jurisdictions to distribute to committee members. The [Local Voters' Pamphlet Packet](#) is available on our website.

The jurisdiction should take formal measures of notifying members of the public when seeking committee members to be appointed to the pro and con committees. If a jurisdiction is unable to locate people to serve on either or both committees, the jurisdiction will notify King County Elections no later than 4:30 p.m. on the day of the pro and con committee appointment form deadline. The notification will detail the efforts made by the jurisdiction to establish the committee(s). In the event that a jurisdiction is unable to appoint committee members by the deadline, King County Elections may appoint committee members. If a committee has not been formed, King County Elections will place a call out to the public on our website. If no eligible person comes forward during the allotted timeframe, King County Elections will notify the district. If a committee is formed, King County Elections will notify both the district and committee members of the existing committee in favor or in opposition.

For all pro and con committee members, regardless if appointed by the district or King County Elections, King County Elections will take the following steps to verify residency. First, King County Elections will verify if the committee member resides in the district by confirmation of the voter registration residential address. If the committee member is not a registered voter, but resides in the district, the committee member must complete a signed declaration of residency. The declaration of residency will affirm the committee member resides in the district. If the committee member is not located in the voter registration database and fails to complete the declaration of residency, the committee member will be unable to serve on the committee.

Jurisdiction's responsibility - preparing an explanatory statement

The jurisdiction must coordinate with their legal counsel to prepare an explanatory statement. An explanatory statement states the effect of a ballot measure if passed into law, and only covers the anticipated effect of the measure should it be passed into law. The statement must not be an argument in favor of or in opposition to the measure.

The statement can be prepared by the jurisdiction or by the jurisdiction's attorney. If the statement is prepared by the jurisdiction, it must be signed-off by the jurisdiction's attorney. The explanatory statement must be submitted by 4:30 p.m. on the day of the deadline.

Pro and con committee responsibilities

The pro and con committees submit statements in favor of and in opposition to the ballot measure for the local voters' pamphlet.

Pro and con statements are to be submitted directly to King County Elections by the committee spokesperson, no later than 5:00 p.m. on the day of the deadline, regardless of postmark. A Pro/Con Statement Submission form is required when submitting a statement. This form is included in the [Local Voters' Pamphlet Packet](#).

After the deadline to submit pro and con statements, King County Elections will email the opposing committee's statement to all committee members identified on the committee

appointment form. Each committee will then have the opportunity to write a rebuttal statement. However, a rebuttal statement is not required. Rebuttal statements must be submitted to King County Elections by 5:00 p.m. on the day of the deadline, regardless of postmark. Rebuttal statements are not exchanged.

King County Elections prefers to receive statements as a Word document sent via email. However, statements may be submitted by email, mail, fax, or in-person. It is the responsibility of the committees to submit all statements to King County Elections by 5:00 p.m. on the appropriate deadline day, regardless of postmark. Submissions received after the deadline will not be accepted.

Word limits and formatting

An explanatory statement is limited to 250 words and no more than five paragraphs. Pro and con statements are limited to 200 words and no more than four paragraphs. Rebuttal statements are limited to 75 words and no more than two paragraphs. (Incorporation measures have a 500 word limit for the pro and con statements.)

 **Word limits**
Explanatory statements:
250 words; 5 paragraphs

Pro and con statements:
200 words; 4 paragraphs

Rebuttal statements:
75 words; 2 paragraphs

Space is limited, so formatting is very important. Format your statement as an essay; text must be written in paragraphs. Tables, lists and bullets are not allowed, and will be changed to a block paragraph with a semicolon to separate each item.

Only use italics to emphasize specific words or statements. Bolding, underlining and all caps are not allowed. **Prohibited formatting within submitted statements will be changed to italics.**

Correct	Incorrect
I approve of <i>justice</i> for all, <i>fairness</i> of the law, and <i>rehabilitation</i> .	I approve of: • JUSTICE for all • Fairness of the law • <u>Rehabilitation</u>

Keep your statement simple and write in the narrative style. The King County Elections Director may reject any statement if, in their opinion, the statement contains obscene, vulgar, profane, scandalous, libelous, defamatory or treasonable matter; any language tending to provoke crime or a breach of the peace, or any language or matter the circulation of which through the mail is prohibited by any act of Congress. Making commercial solicitations or asking for contributions is also prohibited.

Here are a few tips: treat this as a resume and edit carefully, avoid technical terms that may not be generally understood, avoid criticism of opponents.

Proofread carefully. Your statement will be printed exactly as you submit it. Changes to your statement are not allowed once it has been submitted. King County Elections will not proofread any statement for errors in spelling, punctuation or syntax. All statements are published as submitted. King County is not responsible for the validity or accuracy of the statements.

Contact information - jurisdictions

An email address and phone number for the jurisdiction will be published in the local voters’ pamphlet. This contact should be able to respond to questions from voters regarding the jurisdiction’s ballot measure.

Contact information - pro & con committees

The names of the committee members and one phone number, email or website can be published in the voters’ pamphlet. This information is not included in the statement word limit. No titles will be included with the committee members’ names. Government web and email addresses, such as those ending in .gov, may not be used for committee contact information.

Review of statements

Prior to publication of the local voters’ pamphlet, King County Elections will email each committee and jurisdiction a proof of their statements. Upon receipt of the proof, committees and jurisdiction administrators should ensure that there are no discrepancies between the proof copy and the information they submitted.

No changes to the originally submitted statements will be accepted. No new material will be accepted. The only permitted changes are updates to the contact information section. Committees and jurisdictions must notify King County Elections of any discrepancies or contact information updates by 5:00 p.m. on the day of the deadline stated in the email containing the proof copy.



Statement review deadlines

Special elections

Election date	Feb. 10	Apr. 28
Proof copy emailed to committees and jurisdiction	12/22/2025	3/6/2026
Response from committees and jurisdiction due	12/24/2025	3/9/2026

Primary and general elections

Election date	Aug. 4	Nov. 5
Proof copy emailed to committees and jurisdiction	6/12/2026	9/4/2026
Response from committees and jurisdiction due	6/15/2026	9/8/2026

Frequently asked questions

When are local voters’ pamphlets mailed?

King County Elections makes every effort to have ballots and local voters’ pamphlets delivered to voters around the same time; however, even though the materials are mailed at once, they may not reach every voter on the same day.

Local voters’ pamphlet information is also available on our website, where voters can view a personalized voter guide.

How are local voters' pamphlets distributed?

In countywide elections, one copy of the local voters' pamphlet will be mailed to each household in the county. All households in a zip code will receive the same edition of the pamphlet but not all material contained inside will appear on each voter's ballot. For example, two school districts may share the same zip code so both will appear in one edition of the pamphlet, however, the voter only resides within one of those school districts.

In non-countywide elections, the local voters' pamphlet will be included as an insert in each voter's ballot packet. The pamphlet will only contain the measures or races on that voter's ballot.

How can a jurisdiction participate in the local voters' pamphlet?

King County automatically publishes a local voters' pamphlet. All jurisdictions placing measures on the ballot are included.

Recounts

General information about mandatory recounts and how to request a recount.

chapter 09

Mandatory recounts

Recounts are conducted in accordance with [RCW 29A.64](#). Once an election is certified, a mandatory recount is required for candidate races that meet certain thresholds. Depending on the thresholds, either a machine or manual (by hand) recount is required. There are no mandatory recounts for local ballot measures.

A mandatory machine recount is required when the vote total difference between two candidates is less than 2,000 votes and also less than one-half of one percent of the total number of votes cast for both candidates.

A mandatory manual (by hand) recount is required when the vote difference between two candidates is less than 150 votes and also less than one-fourth of one percent of the total number of votes cast for both candidates.

Requested recounts

To request a recount for a candidate race, a political party representative or any candidate for whom votes were cast may file an [application to request a recount](#) of the votes or a portion of the votes cast for all candidates in that race.

To request a recount for a ballot measure, a group of five or more registered voters may file an application to request a recount of the votes or a portion of the votes cast for any ballot measure. The group must designate one person as chair; and include the voting residence of each group member.

Applications requesting a recount of local offices or measures must be filed with King County Elections within two business days after the election has been certified. An [application to request a recount](#) is available on our website. For shared county jurisdictions, an application must be filed with the office with whom filings are made for that jurisdiction.

The application must specify whether the requested recount will be done manually or by machine. A deposit is required at the time of filing the application. The deposit must be either



Mandatory machine recount example

Candidate A receives 5,050 votes and Candidate B receives 5,000 votes for a total of 10,050 votes cast for both candidates.

$$5,050 - 5,000 = 50 \text{ vote difference}$$

$$50 / 10,050 = 0.4975\%$$

For this race, there is less than a 2,000 vote difference between the candidates (50 votes) and also less than one-half of one percent of the total votes cast for both candidates (0.49%). Thus, a machine recount is required.



Mandatory manual recount example

Candidate A receives 6,105 votes and Candidate B receives 6,080 votes for a total of 12,185 votes cast for both candidates.

$$6,105 - 6,080 = 25 \text{ vote difference}$$

$$25 / 12,185 = 0.2052\%$$

For this race, there is less than a 150 vote difference between the candidates (25 votes) and also less than one-fourth of one percent of the total votes cast for both candidates (0.20%). Thus, a manual recount is required.

cash or a certified check. The amount of the deposit is determined by the type of recount requested and the number of ballots cast.

- \$0.15 per ballot cast for a machine recount
- \$0.25 per ballot cast for a manual recount

The deposit is only a security deposit, and is not the total cost of the recount. The total charges are determined by the Canvassing Board. The deposit will be deducted from the total amount, and the party requesting the recount is responsible for paying the difference. If the result of the recount changes the result of the election, the amount of the deposit will be returned.

The Canvassing Board will determine the date and time of the recount. The applicant or affected parties will be notified of the date, time and location of the recount not less than one day prior to the recount. Each person entitled to receive notice of the recount may attend and be accompanied by counsel.

Recount history

Historical results of past recounts are available on our [website](#). Recount information from 2001 to present is grouped by year and displays the race or measure, the type of recount, the original results, and the recount results.

Petitions

Information about initiative and referendum petitions and recall petitions.

chapter 10

Initiative & referendum petitions

Members of the public interested in filing an initiative or referendum petition must file with the relevant jurisdiction. For example, in the case of a King County initiative petition, the petition must be filed with the Clerk of the King County Council. The clerk will initially review the petition and then forward it to King County Elections within three business days of the petition being filed.

The only role that King County Elections has in the initiative and referendum petition process is to determine whether or not the number of valid signatures on the petition is sufficient.

The number of signatures required to validate a petition is determined by the jurisdiction, based on the applicable charter, statute or ordinance. King County Elections does not provide legal interpretation.

Once King County Elections receives the petition, our office will send a letter to the petition sponsor stating the date the petition checking will begin. Additional petition signature pages may be submitted prior to this date. No signatures can be added or removed once the petition checking has started. Any person who signed a filed petition may submit a written request with the jurisdiction to have their signature withdrawn prior to the date the petition checking will begin.

King County Elections verifies the signatures on the petition based on the signature verification guidelines in [WAC 434-379-020](#). In addition to the WAC guidelines, each jurisdiction may have additional signature requirements that may be more restrictive.

King County Elections is limited to the signatures contained in the petition to determine sufficiency. Prior to determining the sufficiency of the petition, all communications regarding the status of the petition are conducted between King County Elections and the jurisdiction administrator. The petition sponsor may be included on the correspondence if the jurisdiction agrees.

Petitions containing the required number of signatures are accepted as prima facie valid until the invalidity has been proven. If the number of signatures is determined as sufficient, a letter and certificate of sufficiency is sent to the petition sponsor and the original petition is returned. If the number of signatures is determined as insufficient, the petition is returned to the petition sponsor with a letter stating the petition is insufficient.

Recall petitions

Recall petitions are conducted in accordance with [RCW 29A.56.110 - 270](#). If the declaration of candidacy for the office concerning the elected official is filed with King County Elections, any person making a charge must file it with our office. If the recall petition reaches the signature

gathering stage, the number of signatures required is determined pursuant to [RCW 29A.56.180](#), and based on the total number of votes cast for the candidates for the office to which the official whose recall is being demanded was elected. King County Elections does not provide legal interpretation.

Data and Statistics

Information available for current and past elections.

chapter 11

Data Visualization Tools

Many different [data and statistic tools](#) are available on our website.

Easily view [ballot return statistics](#) for each election on our website. This information is updated every two hours between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. on business days when we are processing ballots during an active election.

We also provide a dashboard with [candidate filing statistics](#), featuring data visualizations of the number of candidates filed, offices without filings, and other data specific to candidate filing week. The information is a snapshot in time and is subject to change.

Historical voter turnout, ballot drop box returns, and challenge rates can be found on the [historical data and statistics page](#).

Our [signature challenge data dashboard](#) features data visualizations on signature challenges by age, race, language, and gender by election.

Past election results

Find past election results, voters' pamphlets, and other information and reports on our [website](#). We provide official results, election night precinct level results, and final precinct level results in multiple formats.

Past ballot measures

Find past ballot measures, including the ballot title, explanatory statement, statements in favor or against, complete text of measure, requirements for measure passage, and additional information on our [website](#).

City Annexation Process

Information about the annexation process.

chapter 12

City annexation process

Under the State's Growth Management Act:

- A City may only annex areas contiguous to its borders.
- Only territory within the urban growth area may be annexed by a city. Rural areas cannot be annexed.
- If territory is claimed by one city as part of its potential annexation area, that territory may not be annexed by a different city.

Annexation methods

In Washington State there are five major methods of annexation:

- **Election**

The legislative body of a city or town adopts a resolution calling for the annexation of certain territory by election, and files the resolution with the County Council. The County Council then adopts an ordinance setting the date for an election on the question of annexation. Annexation is finalized by a vote of the qualified voters in the annexation area.

- **Direct Petition**

An annexation is initiated by 10% of the residents of the annexation area (or by the owners of properties representing 10% of the assessed valuation of the area). The initiators notify the legislative body of the city or town in writing of their intention to commence annexation proceedings. The legislative body accepts, rejects or geographically modifies the proposed annexation. The petition must then be signed by the owners of properties representing between 60% and 75% of the assessed valuation of the area (based upon a jurisdiction's designation as a code or charter city). The legislative body of the city or town then holds a public hearing on the question of annexation. Annexation is finalized by the adoption of an ordinance by the legislative body. (Note: Currently, the vast majority of annexations in King County and across the state are conducted using this method.)

- **Annexation for Municipal Purposes**

City and town councils, by a majority vote, annex unincorporated territory (whether contiguous or noncontiguous) for park, cemetery or other municipal purposes when such territory is owned by the city or town or when all of the owners of the real property in the territory give their written consent to the annexation. (Note: these annexations are not required to be reviewed by the Boundary Review Board.)

- **Annexation of Unincorporated Islands**

A local jurisdiction resolves to annex unincorporated islands containing less than 100 acres and having at least 60% of its boundaries contiguous to the city or town; or of any size and having at least 60% of the boundaries of the area contiguous to the city if the area existed before June 30, 1994. A public hearing must be held. The annexation is subject to referendum for 45 days after the resolution is adopted, which is initiated by a petition signed by 10% of the area residents.

- **Interlocal Agreement (Two Options)**

An Interlocal Agreement to annex specific territory is adopted by King County, a City and a Fire District. The proposal must be submitted to the Boundary Review Board for administrative review (and public information) but there is no opportunity for a full public hearing for this proposed action.

- Option 1: There is opportunity for a public referendum.
- Option 2: There is, similarly, no opportunity for the public to vote or take other action with respect to this annexation.

Note: The State Growth Management Act requires each city within King County to develop a Comprehensive Plan to guide growth and development for a 20 year period. Each Comprehensive Plan must include lands within current city boundaries *and* lands proposed for annexation - known as Potential Annexation Areas (PAAs). Once a Comprehensive Plan is adopted by the city and accepted by the State, the unincorporated areas within a City's PAA are expected to annex to that City. Changes to a PAA boundary must be adopted by the City that currently includes the area in its Plan and by the City that is seeking to add an area to its PAA. The State must also approve changes in the PAA boundaries.

Role of the Boundary Review Board

The King County Boundary Review Board (BRB) is responsible for reviewing all city and special purpose district annexations in the county. It evaluates annexation proposals for consistency with state and local laws. The BRB also provides direct assistance to residents on annexation questions, such as how to file a petition or challenge an annexation proposal. The BRB also provides information to those seeking to create new cities through incorporation. More information is available on the BRB's [website](#).

Boundary Review Board Evaluation of Each Annexation Proposal

Under all annexation methods described above (excluding the "interlocal agreement" method), there is a point at which the annexation proposal is submitted to the BRB. After ensuring the proposal is technically complete, the BRB circulates a Notice of Intent and staff analysis of that document to other affected governments such as King County, adjacent cities, water and sewer providers. Affected parties (including the applicant, citizens via a petition, affected jurisdictions or the County Council) may "invoke jurisdiction" of the BRB, asking it to formally approve, reject or modify an annexation proposal. A public hearing is held at which the BRB takes testimony from all interested parties. The BRB then issues an opinion approving, rejecting or modifying the proposed annexation. The BRB decision may be appealed to the superior court.



King County Boundary Review Board
206-477-0635
boundaryreviewboard@kingcounty.gov
kingcounty.gov/depts/boundary-review-board

Election Costs

Information about calculating the cost of participating in an election and the cost of publishing a local voters' pamphlet.

chapter 13

Cost of participating in an election

Election costs are based upon a jurisdiction's proportionate share. Each jurisdiction's cost is determined by taking the total number of registered voters in the jurisdiction and dividing it by the total number of all registered voters in all participating jurisdictions in the election.

Election costs vary from one election to the next, depending on a variety of factors. For instance, whether or not the election is held in an odd or even-numbered year is a significant factor for determining costs in a primary or general election; but less of a factor for a special election held in February or April. This is primarily due to the number of participating jurisdictions in an odd-numbered year as opposed to an even-numbered year. Although the overall cost of a primary or general election from one year to the next is somewhat comparable, a general election shared by ten jurisdictions is going to cost more per voter for each jurisdiction than an election shared by 135 jurisdictions.

Special elections in February and April are often shared by a smaller number of jurisdictions, thus the proportional share is often greater. In the case of a single jurisdiction election, the cost would be 100%.

King County Elections will prepare and send billing notifications to the jurisdictions. Depending on the treasurer status of a jurisdiction, payment is processed either via inter-fund transfer or by direct invoicing.

Prior to deciding what election to place a measure on the ballot, jurisdictions may contact King County Elections to request an estimated election cost. Estimates will be based on a reasonable range, taking historical information into account, as well as specific known information about a particular election date. A specific cost or quote cannot be provided, as there are unknown factors such as the number of jurisdictions participating in an election.

Local voters' pamphlet cost

The cost of participating in a local voters' pamphlet is processed separately from election costs. The cost allocation method is slightly different.

Local voters' pamphlet costs are determined for each participating jurisdiction based on the number of registered voters, but the cost is separated into two categories: printing and distribution. Printing costs are driven in large part by the number of pages in a pamphlet, therefore the allocation of printing costs are factored by



Example:

Jurisdiction A has 30,000 registered voters

Jurisdiction B has 50,000 registered voters

Jurisdiction C has 20,000 registered voters

100,000 total registered voters participating in the election

Based on the numbers above, Jurisdiction A would have 30% of the cost allocation, Jurisdiction B would have 50% and Jurisdiction C would have 20%.

the number of pages for each jurisdiction. Distribution costs are not impacted by the number of pages and thus are calculated in the same way as the election costs. The allocation of printing and distribution costs are combined for the full cost of participating in a local voters' pamphlet.

King County Elections prepares the voters' pamphlet billing after the election costs have been processed. Depending on the treasurer status of a jurisdiction, payment is processed either via inter-fund transfer or by direct invoicing.

All jurisdictions are automatically included in the local voters' pamphlet for all elections.

