



Election Division Dispatch

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NEWS & UPDATES

December Conference Reminders

A few reminders ahead of our conference at the Indianapolis Hyatt in downtown Indy from Dec. 15-17:

- To avoid a \$50 per person late fee, please register for the conference not later than 5 PM (Indy time) Friday, Nov. 7, 2025, if your county has not done so already: <https://forms.office.com/g/rnT18tDh6L>
- IED is not publishing any guidebooks or manuals, including the Title 3 code book. The guidebooks and manuals will be posted online at in.gov/sos/elections.
- The Hyatt room block is nearing capacity. Make your hotel reservations soon!

IED is working on a draft agenda and will share it with counties as soon as the topics and timeline are finalized.

Awards Luncheon at Conference

IED has only received a handful of nominations for deserving county election officials to be recognized at our conference, including Lifetime Achievement and Clerk, CEB Member, VR official and Election Employee of the year. If you have a colleague or staff person that you would like to be considered for an award, please complete this survey by close of business Nov. 7, 2025: <https://forms.office.com/g/4X1C96TxzB>

State Convention Delegates

The Democratic and Republican state parties will certify to the Indiana Election Division the number of delegates to be elected in the 2026 primary election. The deadline for state parties to submit their plan is noon, Nov. 30, 2025. Once submitted, IED will publish the plans on the state website.

Delegates can be elected at-large (meaning all voters in the county voting in the party's primary will select delegates) or by districts. The districts are determined by the county party chair, if filed with the CEB not later than noon, Dec. 31, 2025.

If a county chair fails to file the district description, then the CEB must determine those districts at a public meeting held not later than January 7, 2026, the day candidate filing opens. (IC 3-8-4-3) There is no need for the county party chair to file documentation with the CEB if it has opted to elected delegates at-large. This information is found on the state party plan submitted to the state.

Candidates for party office might ask about qualifications to run. The 2026 Candidate's Guide provides more detail, but in short, the state party establishes the requirements and candidates should consult with their respective state party.

Additionally, in 2026, the Democratic Party will elect its precinct committeemen. A Democratic candidate will need to file separate CAN-37 forms, one for each party office (PC and delegate), if they want to run for both offices.

CALENDAR

Note: This calendar includes dates to assist counties who have a special election in certain precincts on 11/4/25. These dates do not apply to a county if no election is being conducted.

- Nov. 1, 2025:** Second of two early voting Saturdays, unless CEB adopts resolution under IC 3-11-10-26.5
- Nov. 1, 2025:** Inspector supply pick-up weekend
- Nov. 3, 2025:** Early voting ends at noon; ABS-Traveling Board apps due by noon; deadline to receive FPCA for an email ballot for any special election
- Nov. 4, 2025:** Special Election Day
- Nov. 11, 2025:** Veterans' Day; IED Closed
- Nov. 12, 2025:** Second VLM card shipment to counties, including first cards returned as undeliverable between 10/11 and 10/31/25, which counties may use to send a SAMC
- Nov. 18, 2025:** Registration re-opens for May 2026 primary
- Nov. 27 & 28, 2025:** Thanksgiving; IED Closed
- Nov. 30, 2025 (NOON):** Deadline for D/R State Parties to file state convention delegate plans with IED
- Dec. 1, 2025:** First day an absentee application can be received for May 2026 primary election (Note: FPCAs for 2026 cycle can be received on or after 1/1/26)
- Dec. 8, 2025:** Third VLM shipment to counties, including first cards returned as undeliverable between 11/1 and 11/26/25, and a secondary shipment with all cards received at the start of the project that counties have already acted upon
- Dec. 15-17, 2025:** IED Election Administrators' Conference
- Dec. 25 & 26, 2025:** Christmas Holiday (observed); IED Closed
- Dec. 31, 2025 (NOON):** Deadline for a county chair to submit boundary descriptions for state delegate districts, if the delegates are not elected at-large
- Jan. 1, 2026:** New Year's Day; IED Closed
- Jan. 1, 2026:** First day an FPCA or ABS-VPD can be filed to receive ABS ballots in 2026
- Jan. 7, 2026:** Candidate Filing Opens
- Jan. 19, 2026:** MLK Day; IED Closed
- Jan. 21, 2026:** 2025 Annual Campaign Finance Report Due for all open candidate committees and PACs (party committees can file their 2025 annual report as late as noon, March 1, 2026)
- Feb. 6, 2026 (NOON):** Candidate filing for primary closes
- Feb. 13, 2026 (NOON):** Deadline to withdraw from primary
- Mar. 2, 2026 (NOON):** Deadline for party committees to file their 2025 annual report

NOVEMBER WEB TRAINING

Nov. 10 & 13 | Voter Cleanup—Exceptions & Reports

Nov. 18 & 20 | Voter Cleanup—Address Points & Precinct Assignments

2025 Calendar is posted to the INSVRS County Portal and subject to change.

IN FOCUS: Filing Petitions for Ballot Access in 2026

Believe it or not it's time to start preparing for the next election cycle, if you haven't already. Unlike 2024, there are no statewide D/R candidates on the ballot in the primary election. This means counties will not have petitions to process on a compressed time frame ahead of the May election.

However, **Independent and minor party candidates** may begin filing petitions to appear on the November ballot as early as January 7, 2026.

To have their name printed on the ballot, these candidates must collect petition signatures of registered voters within their election district that total at least 2% of the total votes cast for all candidates running in the 2022 SOS race.

Countywide totals are compiled in the back of the 2026 *Candidate Guide*. If the election district is smaller than the county, then the clerk will need to pull the 2022 SOS precinct level results to add up all votes cast among all SOS candidates in the precinct making up the election district and then multiply that number by 2%.

If the math results in a decimal point, then you round down. For example, the calculated number is 10.76. In this case, the candidate must have at least 10 certified signatures of registered voters within their election district to have their name printed on the ballot.

Minor party or independent candidates running for federal, statewide, or state legislative office should contact IED at elections@iec.in.gov to have the minimum number of certified signatures needed to be on the ballot.

Federal, state, state legislative, and candidates for judge or prosecuting attorney who wish to run as an Independent or other minor party use the CAN-19 form. For all other local offices, the CAN-21 form is used.

(Note: an independent or minor party candidate can file a CAN-3 to be a write-in, but their name is NOT printed on the ballot.)

School Board Candidates

Most school board candidates gain access to the November ballot by collecting signatures of 10 registered voters in their election district. In most instances, the election district is the entire school corporation. In limited cases, there are smaller election districts within the boundaries of the school corporation. The school plan or the school corporation's attorney would be the best resource if a candidate is unsure about how the districts are structured.

Remember, the law changed in 2025 and school board candidates may affiliate with the Democratic, Republican, Libertarian parties or run as an Independent or other minor party candidate or leave the party affiliation box

blank. However, D/R school board candidates do NOT run in the May primary and straight party voting will NOT apply to these offices.

Libertarian Candidates

Reminder: ballot access rules for Libertarian candidates do not require petitions. Instead, candidates are nominated at convention or through ballot vacancy procedures.

Key 2026 Dates

Jan. 7, 2026: Ind/MP candidates can begin filing petitions on this date for county VR review & certification

May 19, 2026: First day for school board candidate to file petition with county VR official

June 18, 2026 (NOON): Deadline to file school board petition and consent, along with other paperwork

June 30, 2026 (NOON): Deadline for Ind/Minor Party candidates to file petition for county review & certification

July 15, 2026 (NOON): Deadline for Ind/MP candidates to file certified petitions & other required paperwork, if applicable

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

Q. Can the county clerk run for elected office in 2026, either to be re-elected as clerk or to another office, and manage elections for the county?

A. Yes, the clerk can run for office and continue to manage local elections. State law does not require a county clerk to set aside their responsibilities to manage the county's elections under Title 3, even if their name appears on the ballot for elected office.

However, state law does require the county to use the generic seal on its absentee and provisional ballots, if the clerk is running for elected office. The generic seal can be found on the SVRS County Portal under "IED Postings" in your county-specific folder.

Further, the clerk's signature cannot appear on the absentee or provisional ballots, again, if the clerk is running for elected office. No signature will appear on the ballot.

Anecdotally, our office hears from some clerks who choose to step back from some election duties when on the ballot. There are ways to delegate some "clerk" responsibilities to the CEB or to staff using procedures found in IC 3-6-5, generally. Or, the clerk could appoint a proxy to act on their behalf during CEB meetings, for example.

Lastly, party offices—delegate and precinct committeeman—are NOT elected offices. The clerk can run for these offices, and the county would use the "regular" county seal and place the clerk's signature on the absentee and provisional ballots.

VR CORNER

Petition Processing Reminders

Here are a few reminders about petition processing, which will be covered in more detail at the December conference:

1/ The person signing a petition must be registered to vote at the address noted on the petition at the time the petition is processed. If Sally signs the petition in Nov. 2025 at an address on Main Street and she updates her registration in Dec. 2025 to First Avenue, then her entry on the petition will not be counted as she is no longer registered at the Main Street address when the county reviews the petition in Jan. 2026.

2/ Petition carriers can be anyone; there is no legal requirement that they be registered voters in Indiana, for example. However, the carrier MUST complete the affidavit found on the petition of nomination form. No information can be missing. If it is, then the county must try to contact the petition carrier and cannot process the petition until that affidavit is perfected. If the filing deadline passes and the affidavit remains incomplete, then the petition is rejected.

3/ Petition processing may be impacted if Congressional lines are redrawn and adopted during special session, specifically for those Independent or minor party candidates running for one of the seats. Stay tuned for more info!