

NOMINATING PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES AT THE PRIMARY ELECTION

On or before the 120th day before the presidential primary election, the Secretary of State announces the names of the candidates she has selected to appear on the ballot for the office of President of the United States. Selection is based on a number of factors, including whether a candidate:

- Participates in candidate debates;
- Actively campaigns in California;
- Appears in public opinion polls; and/or
- Qualifies for federal campaign matching funds.

Candidates not selected by the Secretary of State may qualify by circulating petitions statewide to gather signatures of voters registered in their party, generally 1% of their party's statewide registration total; however, the Democratic Party requires that Democratic candidates must gather signatures in each of the state's 53 congressional districts, equal in number to 1% of the district's Democratic registration or 500, whichever is fewer.

By the 120th day before the primary election, the chairperson of each qualified party must notify the SOS of the number of delegates who will represent California at the party's national nominating convention. Prior to the primary election, each candidate files a slate of the requisite number of delegates for his/her party, selected according to the party's requirements.

Although only the names of the presidential candidates appear on the primary election ballot, voters actually are casting ballots for the slate of delegates pledged to the candidate of their choice. The slate pledged to the winning candidate goes to the party's national nominating convention. At the convention, the duly elected delegates from all states elect their party's nominee and then notify the Secretary of State.