

**Independent Candidates
November 3, 2020, General Election**

Presidential Candidates

An independent nominee for President of the United States attains ballot status by qualifying a group of 55 Presidential Electors who pledge their votes to that independent presidential nominee.

§§ 8300, 8303, 8304

Qualifications

A candidate for Presidential Elector must have a valid voter registration affidavit on file in the county of residence at the time nomination papers are obtained. There are no political affiliation restrictions on electors; they need only be registered voters in California at the time nomination papers are issued. In addition to qualifying the 55 Presidential Electors, the person seeking the independent nomination for President of the United States must be:

- A natural-born citizen of the United States,
- At least 35 years of age, and
- A resident of the United States for at least 14 years. U.S. Const., art. II, § 1, cl. 5; § 201

Filing Requirements

Nomination papers shall be circulated for signatures between April 24, 2020 (E-193) and August 7, 2020 (E-88), and left for examination with the county elections official of the county in which the papers were circulated. The nomination papers will be forwarded for filing with the Secretary of State after the verification of signatures. § 8403(a)(2)

Whenever a group of candidates for Presidential Elector, equivalent to 55, files a nomination paper with the Secretary of State, the nomination paper may also contain the name of the candidate for United States President and United States Vice President for whom all of those candidates for Presidential Elector pledge themselves to vote. § 8303

The nomination papers must be signed by at least 196,964 registered voters (equivalent to 1% of the statewide registration from the last Report of Registration prior to the November 2018 General Election). All signers must be registered voters of the state; any registered voter who is a candidate may obtain signatures to and sign his or her own nomination papers; circulators shall be registered voters of the state; and the nomination papers shall be delivered to the county elections official of the county in which the signers reside and are voters.

§§ 100, 106(a), 2187(c)(6), 8400, 8451

Each of the 55 candidates for Presidential Elector must complete a Declaration of Candidacy and file it with the county elections official of the county in which he or she is registered to vote. The declaration shall state:

- The candidate's residence address, with street and number
- That the candidate is a voter in the precinct in which he or she resides,
- The name of the office sought (i.e., Presidential Elector),
- That he or she will not withdraw as a candidate before the election, and
- That if elected, he or she will qualify for the office.

§ 8550

The Declaration of Candidacy form shall be left with the county elections official not later than August 7, 2020 (E-88). § 8550

General Information

The nomination paper and Declaration of Candidacy forms can be obtained from the county elections official. The nomination paper must be delivered to the elections official of the county where the paper was circulated. The Declaration of Candidacy can be mailed to or filed in person in the Elections Division of the Secretary of State's Office at 1500 11th Street, 5th Floor, Sacramento, California, 95814, or at any county elections office.

Because of the requirements of the Federal Election Campaign Act, as amended, candidates for federal office should contact the Federal Election Commission at 1050 First Street, NE, Washington, D.C., 20463, or call toll-free (800) 424-9530 for a copy of the Act, related regulations giving the filing requirements for reporting campaign contributions, and the forms on which to file.

No filing fee is required to file as a Presidential Elector.

The term of office for United States President is four years, beginning January 20, 2021.

U.S. Const., art. II, § 1; 20th Amend., § 1

Voter-Nominated Candidates

A candidate for a voter-nominated office, for which no candidate has been nominated at the primary election, may be nominated subsequent to or in lieu of a primary election. §§ 8300-8302

For further information, please contact the Elections Division of the Secretary of State's Office at (916) 657-2166.