



March 12, 2025

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# Nominating Process

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Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the CTAS website ([ctas.tennessee.edu](http://ctas.tennessee.edu)). This website is maintained by CTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee county government.

We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with county government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other CTAS website material.

Sincerely,

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Reference Number: CTAS-860

There are several methods by which a candidate may appear on the ballot. One method, party primary at the regular August election, is statutorily required for several offices: (1) governor, (2) members of the General Assembly, (3) U.S. Senator, and (4) members of the U.S. House of Representatives. T.C.A. § 2-13-202. Nominations for offices other than those listed above can be made either by primary or by any other method authorized under party rules. T.C.A. § 2-13-203. The office of the coordinator of elections should be contacted for information regarding procedures for recognizing a new political party.

In 2011, the General Assembly removed the code provisions relative to candidates appearing on a ballot as the nominee of a local political party and provided that no person's name may be shown on a ballot as the nominee of a political party for any office to be voted on by the voters of a county, unless the political party: (1) Is a statewide political party or a recognized minor party; and (2) Has nominated the person substantially in compliance with Chapter 13 of Title 2.

In an election involving only voters of one county or part of one county, candidates nominated by a method other than primary are to be certified to the county election commission by the qualifying deadline. If a method other than primary election is used to fill an office involving voters in more than one county, the candidate is to be certified to the coordinator of elections, who then certifies that candidate to the election commissions in the proper counties. T.C.A. § 2-13-203.

According to T.C.A. § 2-13-203, if a statewide political party decides to nominate by primary election, the county executive committee shall, at least ninety 180 days before the qualifying deadline, direct, in writing, the county election commission of each county whose voters are entitled to vote to fill the office to hold the election. The decision to nominate by primary election may be revoked up until 90 days before the qualifying deadline. Primaries, if any, for nominating candidates for any office which will appear on the regular August election ballot shall be held on the first Tuesday in May before the August election. In the years in which an election will be held for president of the United States, a political party primary for offices to be elected in the regular August election may be held on the same day as the presidential preference primary. In such event, the qualifying deadline for candidates and for delegate-candidates shall be twelve o'clock (12:00) noon, prevailing time, on the date established in § 2-5-101(a)(2).

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**Source URL:** <https://www.ctas.tennessee.edu/eli/nominating-process>