



Filing for State & Local Office in Texas

compiled by Blue Horizon Texas

To become a candidate for office, you need to file candidacy forms with one or more state, county, or local filing offices. Be sure to call them to confirm the deadlines, forms, and filing requirements for your office.

Step 1: Campaign Treasurer Appointment

Before you file an application for a place on the ballot, announce your intent to run for public office, or solicit/accept contributions or make expenditures, you MUST:

1. Identify your filing authority. See table below.
2. File a **Campaign Treasurer Appointment (CTA)** according to filing authority procedures.

WHERE TO FILE Form CTA	
Office Type	Filing Office
Municipal offices (mayor, council)	Secretary or Clerk of the City, School District, or other governing body* * If there is no clerk or secretary, the appropriate filing authority is the governing body's presiding officer.
School Board offices (trustee)	
Other local offices (e.g., municipal utility district, library/hospital district)	
County offices (e.g., tax assessor, county commissioner, constable)	County Clerk, County Elections Administrator, or Tax Assessor/Collector, as appropriate
State Offices (e.g., state legislature, State Board of Ed)	Texas Ethics Commission

WHEN TO FILE Form CTA
There is no specific filing window for a filing form CTA. However, the form MUST be filed BEFORE you announce you are running, file for a place on the ballot, or solicit/accept campaign donations or make campaign expenditures.

What is a campaign treasurer? The campaign treasurer may be the candidate themselves, a family member or friend, volunteer, or supporter. Although a campaign treasurer appointment is required for ALL candidates, the campaign treasurer has NO legal obligations. A candidate may delegate duties to the campaign treasurer; however, the candidate alone is legally responsible for filing all forms and candidate/officeholder reports of contributions, expenditures, and loans.



Step 2: Application for Place on the Ballot

To file for a place on the ballot, you must:

1. Complete an **Application for a Place on the Ballot**, signed and sworn in person, with your local filing authority or the state/county Democratic Party.
2. Submit petition signatures and/or filing fee, if required.

WHERE TO FILE FOR PLACE ON THE BALLOT	
Office Type*	Filing Office
Municipal offices	Secretary or Clerk or presiding officer (see WHERE TO FILE Form CTA)
School Board offices	
Other local offices (e.g., municipal utility district, library/hospital district)	
County offices	County Democratic Party (If there is no active county party, contact the county elections office to find out where you should file.)
State offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Democratic Party Office (for districts fully contained within the county) • Texas Democratic Party Office (for districts crossing county boundaries)
<p>* Municipal, school board, and other local offices are typically nonpartisan offices, and filing takes place with the same local authority where the form CTA is filed. State and county offices are partisan offices, and in most cases, candidates file for a place on the primary ballot with the State or County Democratic Party.</p>	

WHEN TO FILE FOR PLACE ON THE BALLOT			
Election Type*	Filing Opens	Filing Deadline	Election
2026 Primary & General Election	Nov 8, 2025	Dec 8, 2025	Primary: March 3, 2026 General: Nov 3, 2026
May Uniform Election	Jan 14, 2026	Feb 13, 2026	May 2, 2026
November Uniform Election	Jul 18, 2026	Aug 17, 2026	Nov 3, 2026
<p>*Municipal, school board, and other local offices will appear on the May or November Uniform Election Ballot. State and county partisan offices appear on the March 2026 primary ballot. The winner of the primary will automatically appear on the November 2026 general election ballot.</p>			



Filing Forms, References, and Resources

FILING FORMS	
Form	Details
Appointment of a Campaign Treasurer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All candidates must file this form, even if you do not plan to raise funds. Follow the instructions provided here. This form should be filed with your local filing office before you file your application for a place on the ballot, announce your intent to run for public office, or solicit or accept contributions or make expenditures. Candidates can appoint themselves as their own campaign treasurer.
Application for a Place on the Ballot <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary election Uniform election 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is the primary form to file to become a candidate. It should be signed and sworn to in person with your local filing officer or state/county party.
Petitions and Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State and party offices require candidates to pay a filing fee or collect signatures from local voters. Some local offices may also have this requirement. Check with your local filing authority.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	
Source	References & Resources
Texas Ethics Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campaign Treasure Appointments Campaign Finance Reports
Texas Secretary of State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State/County: Candidate Guide Local: Candidate Guide and Candidacy Filing Important Election Dates
Blue Horizon Texas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blue Horizon Online Candidate Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparing to File for Office – Online Course New Candidate Orientation – Online Course Webinar recordings (fundraising, campaign finance reporting, policy topics, campaign strategies) Library of campaign resources Networking with other candidates and volunteers Other Blue Horizon Resources: Training sessions/events, Podcast, and Campaign Nuts & Bolts webinars