

TITLE 34
ELECTIONS

CHAPTER 14
UNIFORM DISTRICT ELECTION LAW

34-1401. ELECTION ADMINISTRATION. (1) Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, the county clerk shall administer all elections on behalf of any political subdivision, subject to the provisions of this chapter, including all special district elections and elections of special questions submitted to the electors as provided in this chapter. Water districts governed by [chapter 6, title 42](#), Idaho Code, recreational water and/or sewer districts as defined in section [42-3202A](#), Idaho Code, aquifer recharge districts governed by [chapter 42, title 42](#), Idaho Code, ground water management districts governed by [chapter 51, title 42](#), Idaho Code, ground water districts governed by [chapter 52, title 42](#), Idaho Code, and irrigation districts governed by [title 43](#), Idaho Code, are exempt from the provisions of this chapter. Municipal elections shall be conducted under the provisions of this chapter except for the specific provisions of [chapter 4, title 50](#), Idaho Code. All school district and highway district elections shall be conducted pursuant to the provisions of this [chapter 14, title 34](#), Idaho Code. All highway district and school district elections shall be administered by the clerk of the county wherein the district lies. Elections in a joint school district or other political subdivisions that extend beyond the boundaries of a single county shall be conducted jointly by the clerks of the respective counties, and the clerk of the home county shall exercise such powers as are necessary to coordinate the election. "Home county" shall be defined as the county in which the business office for the district or political subdivision is located.

(2) For the purposes of achieving uniformity, the secretary of state shall, from time to time, provide directives and instructions to the various county clerks. Unless a specific exception is provided in this chapter, the provisions of this chapter shall govern in all questions regarding the conduct of elections on behalf of all political subdivisions. In all matters not specifically covered by this chapter, other provisions of [title 34](#), Idaho Code, governing elections shall prevail over any special provision which conflicts therewith.

(3) The county clerk shall conduct the elections for political subdivisions and shall perform all necessary duties of the election official of a political subdivision including, but not limited to, notice of the filing deadline, notice of the election, and preparation of the election calendar.

[34-1401, added 1992, ch. 176, sec. 4, p. 555; am. 1993, ch. 313, sec. 5, p. 1160; am. 1993, ch. 379, sec. 1, p. 1392; am. 1996, ch. 298, sec. 1, p. 977; am. 2009, ch. 341, sec. 59, p. 1032; am. 2010, ch. 185, sec. 9, p. 387; am. 2011, ch. 11, sec. 15, p. 32; am. 2021, ch. 325, sec. 3, p. 992.]

34-1402. REGISTRATION. All electors must register with the county clerk before being able to vote in any primary, general, special or any other election conducted in this state. The county clerk shall determine, for each registered elector, the elections for which he is eligible to vote by a determination of the applicable code areas. The determination of tax code area shall be made for all political subdivisions including those otherwise exempt from the provisions of this chapter.

The county clerk shall conform to the provisions of [chapter 4, title 34](#), Idaho Code, in the administration of registration for all political subdivisions within the county.

[34-1402, added 1992, ch. 176, sec. 4, p. 555; am. 2003, ch. 48, sec. 13, p. 187; am. 2011, ch. 285, sec. 12, p. 783.]

34-1403. CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS. All elections conducted in this state on behalf of each political subdivision within the county shall be conducted in a uniform manner with regard to the qualifications of electors and shall be conducted on the dates as provided by law. In the event that a statute governing a political subdivision provides for qualifications more restrictive than the qualifications for an elector in section [34-402](#), Idaho Code, the election official of the district shall provide an elector's oath to be executed at the time of the election certifying to the elector's qualifications for the specific election.

[34-1403, added 1992, ch. 176, sec. 4, p. 556; am. 1993, ch. 313, sec. 6, p. 1160.]

34-1404. DECLARATION OF CANDIDACY. (1) Candidates for election in any political subdivision shall be nominated by nominating petitions, each of which shall bear the name of the nominee, the office for which the nomination is made, the term for which nomination is made, the signature of not less than five (5) electors of the candidate's specific zone or district of the political subdivision, and be filed with the clerk of the political subdivision. The form of the nominating petition shall be as provided by the county clerk and shall be uniform for all political subdivisions. For an election to be held on the third Tuesday in May, in even-numbered years, the nomination petition shall be filed during the period specified in section [34-704](#), Idaho Code. The clerk of the political subdivision shall verify the qualifications of the nominees and shall, no more than seven (7) days after the close of filing, certify the nominees to be placed on the ballot of the political subdivision. For an election to be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday of November, in even-numbered years, the nomination shall be filed on or before September 1. The clerk of the political subdivision shall verify the qualifications of the nominees and shall, no more than seven (7) days after the close of filing, certify the nominees to be placed on the ballot of the political subdivisions. For all other elections, the nomination shall be filed not later than 5:00 p.m. on the ninth Friday preceding the election for which the nomination is made. The clerk of the political subdivision shall verify the qualifications of the nominee and shall, no more than seven (7) days following the filing, certify the nominees to be placed on the ballot of the political subdivision.

(2) Nominating petitions shall include campaign contact information for candidates, including phone numbers.

(3) All information in nominating petitions shall be made publicly available upon request.

[34-1404, added 1993, ch. 313, sec. 8, p. 1161; am. 2009, ch. 341, sec. 60, p. 1033; am. 2010, ch. 185, sec. 10, p. 388; am. 2011, ch. 11, sec. 16, p. 33; am. 2014, ch. 162, sec. 3, p. 457; am. 2022, ch. 305, sec. 3, p. 965.]

34-1405. NOTICE OF ELECTION FILING DEADLINE. (1) Not more than fourteen (14) nor less than seven (7) days preceding the candidate filing deadline for an election, the county clerk shall cause to be published a notice of the forthcoming candidate filing deadline for all taxing districts. The notice shall include not less than the name of the political subdivision, the place where filing for each office takes place, and a notice of the availability of declarations of candidacy. The notice shall be published in the official newspaper of the political subdivision.

(2) The secretary of state shall compile an election calendar annually which shall include not less than a listing of the political subdivisions which will be conducting candidate elections in the forthcoming year, the place where filing for each office takes place, and the procedure for a declaration of candidacy. Annually in December, the county clerk shall cause to be published the election calendar for the county for the following calendar year. This publication shall be in addition to the publication required by paragraph (1) of this section. The election calendar for the county shall be published in at least two (2) newspapers published within the county, but if this is not possible, the calendar shall be published in one (1) newspaper which has general circulation within the county. Copies of the election calendar shall be available, without charge, from the office of the secretary of state or the county clerk.

[34-1405, added 1992, ch. 176, sec. 4, p. 556; am. 1993, ch. 313, sec. 9, p. 1161; am. 2009, ch. 341, sec. 61, p. 1034.]

34-1405A. WITHDRAWAL OF CANDIDACY. A candidate for nomination or candidate for election to an office may withdraw from the election by filing a notarized statement of withdrawal with the officer with whom his declaration of candidacy was filed. The statement must contain all information necessary to identify the candidate and the office sought and the reason for withdrawal. A candidate may not withdraw later than forty-six (46) days before an election.

[34-1405A, added 2011, ch. 11, sec. 17, p. 33; am. 2019, ch. 96, sec. 12, p. 350.]

34-1406. NOTICE OF ELECTION. The county clerk shall give notice for each political subdivision for any election by publishing such notice in the official newspaper of the county. The notice shall state the date of the election, the polling places, and the hours during which the polls shall be open for the purpose of voting. The first publication shall be made not less than twelve (12) days prior to the election, and the last publication of notice shall be made not less than five (5) days prior to the election. For each primary, general and special election, the county clerk shall cause to be published a facsimile, except as to size, of the sample ballot in at least two (2) newspapers published within the county, but if this is not possible, the sample ballot shall be published in one (1) newspaper published within the county or one (1) newspaper that has general circulation within the county. Such publication shall be in conjunction with the second notice of election required by this section. The political subdivision shall notify the county clerk in writing of the official newspaper of the political subdivision.

[34-1406, added 1992, ch. 176, sec. 4, p. 557; am. 1993, ch. 313, sec. 10, p. 1162; am. 2009, ch. 341, sec. 62, p. 1034; am. 2011, ch. 11, sec. 18, p. 34.]

34-1407. WRITE-IN CANDIDATES. (1) No write-in candidate for any non-partisan elective office shall be counted unless a declaration of intent has been filed indicating that the person desires the office and is legally qualified to assume the duties of the office. The declaration of intent shall be filed with the clerk of the political subdivision by no later than the eighth Friday before the date of the election.

(2) If the statutes governing elections within a specific political subdivision provide that no election shall be held in the event that no more than one (1) candidate has filed for an office, that statute shall be interpreted in such a manner as to allow for filing a declaration of intent for a write-in candidate until the eighth Friday preceding the election. However, if no candidate has filed within that time, no election shall be held for that political subdivision. The provisions of this section shall not apply to candidates in the primary or general election covered by the provisions of section [34-702A](#), Idaho Code.

[34-1407, added 1992, ch. 176, sec. 4, p. 557; am. 1993, ch. 313, sec. 11, p. 1162; am. 1997, ch. 362, sec. 1, p. 1070; am. 2011, ch. 11, sec. 19, p. 34; am. 2019, ch. 96, sec. 13, p. 350; am. 2020, ch. 69, sec. 5, p. 158.]

34-1408. ABSENTEE BALLOTS. Any registered elector may vote at any election by absentee ballot as provided in [chapter 10, title 34](#), Idaho Code. In the event of a written application to the county clerk for an absentee ballot, the application shall be deemed to be an application for all ballots to be voted in the election, and the county clerk shall provide the ballot of the political subdivision to the elector.

[34-1408, added 1992, ch. 176, sec. 4, p. 558; am. 2010, ch. 185, sec. 11, p. 388.]

34-1409. CONDUCT OF ELECTION ON ELECTION DAY. At all elections conducted by any political subdivision, the polls shall be opened at 8:00 a.m. and remain open until all registered electors of that precinct have appeared and voted or until 8:00 p.m. of the same day, whichever comes first. However, the election official may, at his option, open the polls in his jurisdiction at 7:00 a.m.

All political subdivisions conducting elections on the same date shall, whenever practicable, use the same polling places.

[34-1409, added 1992, ch. 176, sec. 4, p. 558.]

34-1410. CANVASSING OF ELECTION RESULTS. The board of county commissioners shall conduct the canvass of the election results within ten (10) days after the election, in the manner provided in [chapter 12, title 34](#), Idaho Code. The county clerk shall certify the election results to the clerk of each political subdivision for which an election was held. Each political subdivision shall issue the appropriate certificates of election.

[34-1410, added 1992, ch. 176, sec. 4, p. 558; am. 2010, ch. 185, sec. 12, p. 389; am. 2011, ch. 11, sec. 20, p. 34.]

34-1411. PAYMENT OF ELECTION EXPENSES BY COUNTY. (1) On and after January 1, 2011, no county shall charge any taxing district, as defined in section [63-201](#), Idaho Code, for expenses associated with conducting any election on behalf of any taxing district, with the exception of expenses associated with conducting municipal runoff elections, which shall be paid by the city adopting runoff elections pursuant to the provisions of section [50-612](#) or [50-707B](#), Idaho Code. Expenses associated with conducting taxing district elections shall include:

- (a) Costs of ballot preparation, distribution, printing and counting, including absentee ballots.
- (b) Costs of printing poll books and costs of tally books, stamps, signs and any other voting supplies, publications and equipment.
- (c) Wages or other compensation for election judges and clerks or any county employees or officials performing duties associated with conducting taxing district elections.
- (d) Costs paid for renting polling facilities.
- (e) Acquisition, repair, maintenance or any other costs associated with voting machines or vote tally systems as defined in section [34-2401](#), Idaho Code.
- (f) Costs of publishing and printing election notices and ballots.

(2) Counties shall not be responsible for any election expenses prior to the time any taxing district orders an election, such as notice and costs for public hearings and notice and costs for public hearings on ballot measures.

(3) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (1) of this section, all ballot questions shall be limited to two hundred fifty (250) words or less. If a ballot question is in excess of two hundred fifty (250) words, the entity proposing a ballot question that is not a state constitutional amendment shall be required to pay the ballot printing costs associated with the ballot question.

[34-1411, added 2009, ch. 341, sec. 63, p. 1035; am. 2024, ch. 260, sec. 14, p. 907.]

34-1412. TERMS OF OFFICE GOING BEYOND NEXT ELECTION DATE. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, whenever a member of the governing board of a taxing district has been elected to a term of office that goes beyond the next election date as provided by statute, such member of the governing board shall be entitled to serve his or her term of office and shall continue to serve until the following election provided by statute. All governing board members elected on and after January 1, 2011, shall serve terms of office beginning and ending as otherwise provided by statute.

[34-1412, added 2011, ch. 11, sec. 21, p. 34.]

34-1413. PROCEDURES FOR CERTAIN POLITICAL SUBDIVISION ELECTIONS TO MODIFY VOTING PROCEDURES. Any county that wishes to modify voting procedures for a political subdivision election shall submit an election plan to the secretary of state for approval for the modified voting procedures to be effective at least forty (40) calendar days prior to an election. The secretary of state shall notify the political subdivision of its approval,

disapproval and, if it is disapproved, what remedial measures may be taken that would allow for approval of the voting plan.

[34-1413, added 2011, ch. 285, sec. 13, p. 783; am. 2014, ch. 162, sec. 4, p. 457.]

34-1414. ELECTION BY ZONES -- EXCEPTION FOR CERTAIN POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the governing body of any political subdivision that contains no more than one hundred forty (140) registered voters at the last general election may apply to the appropriate board of county commissioners for a determination that the election of the members of the political subdivision's governing body may be held at large instead of by district zones or subdistricts. The board of county commissioners shall make the determination whether to permit the election of the political subdivision's governing body to be elected at large and the county clerk shall provide notice of the board's decision to the affected electors at least ninety (90) days before the next general election. If the board of county commissioners approves the request for an at-large election, the approval shall apply to future elections until revoked by the board of county commissioners.

[34-1414, added 2021, ch. 70, sec. 1, p. 252.]

34-1415. ELECTION ZONES, DISTRICTS, AND SUBDISTRICTS. Any city or special district subject to the provisions of this chapter whose governing body members are elected by separate zones, districts, or subdistricts shall notify the county clerk of any approved changes in the boundaries of such zones, districts, or subdistricts within thirty (30) days after the approval of such changes or within thirty (30) days prior to the filing deadline for candidates for the governing body, whichever is earlier.

[34-1415, added 2022, ch. 257, sec. 1, p. 837.]