

## GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICE

All candidates must meet the following requirements to qualify for office:

- Qualified elector (registered voter) of the State of Mississippi and of the district of the office for which the candidate seeks election. *Miss. Const. of 1890, Art. XII, § 250.*
- Never have been convicted of bribery, perjury or other infamous crime, being defined as a crime punishable by a minimum of one (1) year confinement in the state penitentiary, unless pardoned for the offense. *Miss. Const. of 1890, Art. IV, § 44.*
- Never have been convicted of a felony in a court of this state; or, of a felony in a federal court or of a crime in a court of another state which is a felony under the laws of this state on or after December 8, 1992; excluding, however, a conviction of manslaughter or a violation of the United States Internal Revenue Code or any violation of the tax laws of this state, unless the offense also involved the misuse or abuse of an office or money coming into a candidate's hands by virtue of an office. *Miss. Const. of 1890, Art. IV, § 44.*

## ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS BY OFFICE

### UNITED STATES SENATOR

Each candidate for Senator shall have attained the age of thirty (30) years, been a citizen of the United States for at least nine (9) years, and, at the time of the election, an inhabitant of the state he/she seeks to represent. *U.S. Const. Art. I § 3, cl. 3.*

### UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE

Each Congressional district shall be entitled to one (1) representative, who shall have attained the age of twenty-five (25) years, and been seven (7) years a citizen of the United States, and who shall, when elected, be an inhabitant of the state. *Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-1035.*

### SUPREME COURT JUSTICE

A qualified elector of the Supreme Court District in which election is sought, at least thirty (30) years of age, a practicing attorney and a citizen of the state for five (5) years preceding the day of election. *Miss. Const. of 1890, Art. VI, §150.*

### COURT OF APPEALS JUSTICE

A qualified elector, at least thirty (30) years of age, a practicing attorney, and a citizen of the state for five (5) years preceding the day of election. *Miss. Const. of 1890, Art. VI, § 150.*

### CHANCERY COURT JUDGE

A qualified elector, at least twenty-six (26) years of age, a practicing attorney for five (5) years, and a citizen of the state for five (5) years preceding the day of election. *Miss. Const. of 1890, Art. VI, § 154.*

### CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE

A qualified elector, at least twenty-six (26) years of age, a practicing attorney for five (5) years, and a citizen of the state for five (5) years preceding the day of election. *Miss. Const. of 1890, Art. VI, § 154.*

### COUNTY COURT JUDGE

A qualified elector, at least twenty-six (26) years of age, a practicing attorney for five (5) years, and a citizen of the state for five (5) years preceding the day of election. *Miss. Const. of 1890, Art. VI, § 154; Miss. Code Ann. § 9-5-5.*

### MISSISSIPPI LEVEE DISTRICT COMMISSIONER

A qualified elector and resident of the respective county and levee district from which he/she seeks election. *Miss. Const. of 1890, Art. XI, §230.*

The Mississippi Levee District consists of two (2) members from each of the counties of Bolivar and Washington, and one from each of the counties of Issaquena, Sharkey and a portion of Humphreys. This election year, one (1) member shall be elected from the counties of Bolivar, Washington, Humphreys and Sharkey. *Chapter 85 of the Laws of 1930.*

### COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

A resident and qualified elector (registered voter) of the district from which election is sought, and have a high school diploma or its equivalent. *Miss. Code Ann. § 37-5-1.*

No person who is a resident of the territory embraced within a municipal separate school district or a special municipal separate school district is eligible to be a member of the county board of education. *Miss. Code Ann. § 37-5-3.*

Each school board member shall be required to complete a basic course of training and education for local school board members conducted by the Mississippi School Boards Association within six (6) months of his selection. In addition, each school board member shall be required to file annually in the office of the school board a certificate of completion of a course of continuing education conducted by the Mississippi School Boards Association. *Miss. Code Ann. § 37-7-306.*

### **CONSOLIDATED/CONSOLIDATED LINE SCHOOL DISTRICT TRUSTEE**

A bona fide resident and qualified elector (registered voter) of the district in which election is sought, and have a high school diploma or its equivalent. *Miss. Const. of 1890, Art. XII, §250; Miss. Code Ann. §§ 37-7-201, 37-7-306.*

Each school board member shall be required to complete a basic course of training and education for local school board members conducted by the Mississippi School Boards Association within six (6) months of his selection. In addition, each school board member shall be required to file annually in the office of the school board a certificate of completion of a course of continuing education conducted by the Mississippi School Boards Association. *Miss. Code Ann. § 37-7-306.*

### **MUNICIPAL SEPARATE SCHOOL DISTRICT TRUSTEE**

A bona fide resident and qualified elector (registered voter) of the district in which election is sought, and have a high school diploma or its equivalent. *Miss. Const. of 1890, Art. XII, § 250; Miss. Code Ann. §§ 37-7-201; 37-7-306.*

Each school board member shall be required to complete a basic course of training and education for local school board members conducted by the Mississippi School Boards Association within six (6) months of his selection. In addition, each school board member shall be required to file annually in the office of the school board a certificate of completion of a course of continuing education conducted by the Mississippi School Boards Association. *Miss. Code Ann. § 37-7-306.*

### **SPECIAL MUNICIPAL SEPARATE SCHOOL DISTRICT TRUSTEE**

A bona fide resident and qualified elector (registered voter) of the district in which election is sought, and have a high school diploma or its equivalent. *Miss. Const. of 1890, Art. XII, § 250; Miss. Code Ann. §§ 37-7-201, 37-7-306, 37-7-707*

Each school board member shall be required to complete a basic course of training and education for local school board members conducted by the Mississippi School Boards Association within six (6) months of his selection. In addition, each school board member shall be required to file annually in the office of the school board a certificate of completion of a course of continuing education conducted by the Mississippi School Boards Association. *Miss. Code Ann. § 37-7-306.*

## QUALIFYING FOR OFFICE

Most individuals seeking elected office may choose to qualify as either a political party or independent candidate. A political party candidate participates in the June Primary Election (and possibly the Primary Runoff Election three (3) weeks thereafter), seeking to win a particular political party's nomination for a particular office. The winning candidates in the Primary Elections move forward and participate in the November General Election as the respective political party's nominees for the respective offices. An independent candidate participates only in the November General Election and, for the purposes of the ballot, has no designated political party affiliation.

*In Mississippi, candidates for judicial office (with the exception of candidates for Justice Court Judge), County School Board, Consolidated/Consolidated Line School District Trustee, Municipal Separate School District Trustee and Special Municipal Separate School District Trustee run as non-partisan candidates and only participate in the November General Election, with no designation of a political party affiliation on the ballot or otherwise.*

### POLITICAL PARTY/PRIMARY ELECTION CANDIDATES

An individual who chooses to seek election as a partisan candidate and therefore participate in a primary election to seek the nomination of a particular political party must file with the proper office a "Qualifying Statement of Intent for a Candidate for Party Nomination," together with the applicable qualifying fee, on or before the qualifying deadline, as is explained further below. Qualifying forms for party candidates are available from the respective political party's state office or on the Secretary of State's website located at <http://www.sos.ms.gov/Elections-Voting/Pages/Candidate-Qualifying-Forms.aspx>.

### INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES

An individual who chooses to seek election as an independent candidate must file with the proper office a "Qualifying Statement of Intent for an Independent Candidate," a qualifying petition, which must be signed by a certain number of qualified electors (registered voters) from the state, county or district from which the candidate seeks election and the applicable qualifying fee, on or before the qualifying deadline, as is explained further below. The number of signatures required on the qualifying petition is dependent upon the specific office sought by the candidate. Each candidate must obtain the certification of the signatures from the Circuit Clerk's Office of the county from where the signatures were collected prior to filing his/her qualifying paperwork with the appropriate office.

Independent candidates should budget sufficient time to ensure the certification of petition signatures by the respective Circuit Clerk's Office well in advance of the qualifying deadline. Qualifying forms for independent candidates are available from the Circuit Clerk's Office or on the Secretary of State's website located at <http://www.sos.ms.gov/Elections-Voting/Pages/Candidate-Qualifying-Forms.aspx>.

## WHAT, WHEN AND WHERE TO QUALIFY FOR OFFICE

### FOR UNITED STATES SENATOR:

#### As a Political Party Candidate:

- 1) Qualifying Statement of Intent for a Candidate for Party Nomination, and
- 2) Qualifying fee in the amount of One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) made payable to the appropriate State Party,
- 3) Filed with the appropriate State Party,
- 4) No later than 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 1, 2018. If qualifying by mail, please note, March 1, 2018 is not a post-mark deadline, but an actual receipt deadline, meaning the State Party must be in actual receipt of the Statement of Intent and qualifying fee by 5:00 p.m., Thursday, March 1, 2018.

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#### As an Independent Candidate:

- 1) Petition signed by not less than one thousand (1,000) qualified electors (registered voters) of the State of Mississippi, certified by the Circuit Clerks' Offices of the respective counties from which the signatures were collected,
- 2) Qualifying Statement of Intent for an Independent Candidate, and
- 3) Qualifying fee in the amount of One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) made payable to the Secretary of State,
- 4) Filed with the Secretary of State's Office,
- 5) No later than 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 1, 2018. If qualifying by mail, please note, March 1, 2018 is not a post-mark deadline, but an actual receipt deadline, meaning the Secretary of State must be in actual receipt of the Statement of Intent, petition and qualifying fee by 5:00 p.m., Thursday, March 1, 2018.

**FOR UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE:**

**As a Political Party Candidate:**

- 1) Qualifying Statement of Intent for a Candidate for Party Nomination, and
- 2) Qualifying fee in the amount of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) made payable to the appropriate State Party,
- 3) Filed with the appropriate State Party,
- 4) No later than 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 1, 2018. If qualifying by mail, please note, March 1, 2018 is not a post-mark deadline, but an actual receipt deadline, meaning the State Party must be in actual receipt of the Statement of Intent and qualifying fee by 5:00 p.m., Thursday, March 1, 2018.

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**As an Independent Candidate:**

- 1) Petition signed by not less than two hundred (200) qualified electors (registered voters) of the congressional district from which election is sought, certified by the Circuit Clerks' Offices of the respective counties from which the signatures were collected,
- 2) Qualifying Statement of Intent for an Independent Candidate, and
- 3) Qualifying fee in the amount of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) made payable to the Secretary of State,
- 4) Filed with the Secretary of State's Office,
- 5) No later than 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 1, 2018. If qualifying by mail, please note, March 1, 2018 is not a post-mark deadline, but an actual receipt deadline, meaning the Secretary of State must be in actual receipt of the Statement of Intent, petition and qualifying fee by 5:00 p.m., Thursday, March 1, 2018.

**FOR SUPREME COURT, COURT OF APPEALS, CHANCERY OR CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE:**

- 1) Qualifying Statement of Intent for Judicial Candidate,
- 2) Qualifying fee:
  - a. Supreme Court Justice, in the amount of Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00), made payable to the Secretary of State;
  - b. Court of Appeals Judge, in the amount of Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00), made payable to the Secretary of State; or
  - c. Chancery and Circuit Court Judge, in the amount of One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00), made payable to the Secretary of State; and
- 3) Affidavit/Pledge of Judicial Candidate,
- 4) Filed with the Secretary of State's office,
- 5) No later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 11, 2018. If qualifying by mail, please note, May 11, 2018 is not a post-mark deadline, but an actual receipt deadline, meaning the Secretary of State's Office must be in actual receipt of the Statement of Intent, Affidavit/Pledge and qualifying fee by 5:00 p.m., Friday, May 11, 2018.
- 6) Statement of Economic Interest filed electronically with the Mississippi Ethics Commission within fifteen (15) days of qualifying for office.
- 7) Required Campaign Finance Disclosure Reports filed with the Secretary of State's office by 5:00 p.m. on the applicable deadline(s).

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**FOR COUNTY COURT JUDGE:**

- 1) Qualifying Statement of Intent for Judicial Candidate,
- 2) Qualifying fee in the amount of Fifteen Dollars (\$15.00), made payable to the Circuit Clerk of the county of the candidate's residence, and
- 3) Affidavit/Pledge of Judicial Candidate,
- 4) Filed with the Circuit Clerk's Office in the county of the candidate's residence,
- 5) No later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 11, 2018. If qualifying by mail, please note, May 11, 2018 is not a post-mark deadline, but an actual receipt deadline, meaning the Circuit Clerk's Office must be in actual receipt of the Statement of Intent, Affidavit/Pledge and qualifying fee

by 5:00 p.m., Friday, September 7, 2018.

- 6) Statement of Economic Interest filed electronically with the Mississippi Ethics Commissioner within fifteen (15) days of qualifying for office.
- 7) Required Campaign Finance Disclosure Reports filed with the Circuit Clerk's Office by 5:00 p.m. on the applicable deadline(s).

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**FOR MISSISSIPPI LEVEE DISTRICT COMMISSIONER:**

- 1) Qualifying Statement of Intent of an Independent Candidate,
- 2) Petition signed by not less than fifty (50) qualified electors (registered voters) of the county and levee district from which election is sought, certified by the Circuit Clerk's Office of the county from which signatures were collected, and
- 3) Qualifying fee in the amount of One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00), made payable to the Circuit Clerk of the county of the candidate's residence,
- 4) Filed with the Circuit Clerk's Office in the county and levee district from which election is sought,
- 5) No later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, May 7, 2018. If qualifying by mail, please note, May 7, 2018 is not a post-mark deadline, but an actual receipt deadline, meaning the Circuit Clerk's Office must be in actual receipt of the Statement of Intent, Petition and qualifying fee by 5:00 p.m., Monday, May 7, 2018.
- 6) Statement of Economic Interest filed electronically with the Mississippi Ethics Commission within fifteen (15) days of qualifying for office.
- 7) Required Campaign Finance Disclosure Reports filed with the Circuit Clerk's Office by 5:00 p.m. on the applicable deadline(s).



**FOR COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER, SPECIAL MUNICIPAL SEPARATE SCHOOL DISTRICT TRUSTEE OR CONSOLIDATED/CONSOLIDATED LINE SCHOOL DISTRICT TRUSTEE:**

- 1) Qualifying Statement of Intent, and
- 2) Petition signed by not less than fifty (50) qualified electors (registered voters) of the district from which election is sought<sup>1</sup>, certified by the Circuit Clerk's Office of the county from which the signatures were collected,
- 3) Filed with the Circuit Clerk's Office,
- 4) No more than ninety (90) days (Wednesday, August 8, 2018) nor later than 5:00 p.m. on the sixtieth (60<sup>th</sup>) day before the election (Friday, September 7, 2018).
- 5) Statement of Economic Interest filed electronically with the Mississippi Ethics Commission within fifteen (15) days of qualifying for office.
- 6) Required Campaign Finance Disclosure Reports filed with the Circuit Clerk's Office by 5:00 p.m. on the applicable deadline(s).

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**FOR MUNICIPAL SEPARATE SCHOOL DISTRICT TRUSTEE:**

- 1) Qualifying Statement of Intent,
- 2) Petition, with Affidavit, signed by not less than fifty (50) qualified electors (registered voters) of the district from which election is sought<sup>2</sup>, certified by the Circuit Clerk's Office of the county from which the signatures were collected,
- 3) Filed with the Circuit Clerk's Office,
- 4) No more than ninety (90) days (Wednesday, August 8, 2018) nor later than 5:00 p.m. on the sixtieth (60<sup>th</sup>) day before the election (Friday, September 7, 2018).
- 5) Statement of Economic Interest filed electronically with the Mississippi Ethics Commission within fifteen (15) days of qualifying for office.
- 6) Required Campaign Finance Disclosure Reports filed with the Circuit Clerk's Office by 5:00 p.m. on the applicable deadline(s).

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<sup>1</sup> If there are less than one hundred (100) qualified electors (registered voters) of the district from which election is sought, the qualifying petition must be signed by not less than twenty percent (20.0%) of the qualified electors of the district.

<sup>2</sup> If there are less than one hundred (100) qualified electors (registered voters) of the district from which election is sought, the qualifying petition must be signed by not less than twenty percent (20.0%) of the qualified electors of the district.