

# TENNESSEE BALLOT ACCESS PROCEDURES FOR CANDIDATES FOR U.S. PRESIDENT

## Statewide Party Candidates

No later than the first Tuesday in February (February 5, 2008) in a year in which presidential electors are elected, a Presidential Preference Primary will be held in Tennessee for each statewide political party. TCA §§2-5-205 and 2-13-302. There are two methods by which candidates for nomination to the Presidency by either the Democratic or Republican Party may qualify to appear on the ballot in the Presidential Preference Primary in Tennessee.

- ◆ One method is to be named by the Secretary of State, who is required to submit a list of names to the State Election Commission no later than the first Tuesday in December (December 4, 2007). TCA §2-5-205. The Secretary of State has sole discretion to include only those candidates that he has determined are generally advocated or recognized as candidates in national news media throughout the United States. TCA §2-5-205.
- ◆ The other method for a party candidate to gain access to the primary ballot is to submit a petition signed by at least twenty-five hundred (2,500) registered voters no later than 12:00 noon, prevailing time, on the first Tuesday in December (December 4, 2007). TCA §2-5-205. Petitions may be obtained no more than 90 days before the qualifying deadline date (first date to obtain petition is September 5, 2007). Nominating petitions are to be filed with the State Election Commission and certified duplicates with the Coordinator of Elections (both of these shall be submitted to 312 Eighth Avenue North, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, William Snodgrass Tower, Nashville, Tennessee 37243) and with the chairperson of the state executive committee of the candidate's party. There are no filing fees.

State Democratic Party  
223 Eighth Avenue North, Suite 200  
Nashville, TN 37203  
(615) 327-9779

State Republican Party  
2424 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue South, Suite 200  
Nashville, TN 37212  
(615) 269-4260

The Secretary of State shall advise each of the prospective candidates by the most expeditious means available that, unless a candidate withdraws the candidate's name by 12:00 noon, prevailing time, on the second Tuesday in December (December 11, 2007), the candidate's name will appear on the ballot of the candidate's party in the Presidential Preference Primary. If such a person executes and files with the State Election Commission an affidavit stating without qualification that the candidate is not and does not intend to become a candidate for president in the forthcoming presidential election, the candidate's name shall not be on the ballot. TCA §2-5-205.

On the first Tuesday in February (February 5, 2008) before presidential electors are elected, a Presidential Preference Primary shall be held for each statewide political party to elect delegates to the national conventions of the parties. If no candidate will appear on the primary ballot of a party, then no presidential preference primary shall be held for that political party. TCA §2-13-205.

## **Independent Candidates**

Presidential electors are elected on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November (November 4, 2008). An independent presidential candidate must choose eleven (11) electors as outlined below. Each elector shall circulate his own petition to obtain the signatures and addresses of at least twenty-five (25) registered voters. Unless a candidate files eleven (11) separate petitions (one for each elector), each of which contains the signatures of at least twenty-five (25) registered voters, the candidate's name will not appear on the ballot. The filing deadline for petitions is 12:00 NOON, Central time, on the third Thursday in August (August 21, 2008). TCA §2-5-101(a). Petitions may be obtained no more than 90 days before the qualifying deadline date (first date to obtain petition is May 23, 2008). Any registered voter of the State of Tennessee may sign the nominating petition. However, the electors must be selected as follows: For each of the nine congressional districts in Tennessee, one (1) elector will be elected who is a resident of the congressional district. Two (2) additional electors will be elected who may be residents of any part of the state. TCA §§2-15-101 and 2-15-102.

The original of each petition shall be filed with the State Election Commission and a certified duplicate with the Coordinator of Elections. Both shall be submitted to the following address:

312 Eighth Avenue North  
9<sup>th</sup> Floor, William Snodgrass Tower  
Nashville, Tennessee 37243

It is important to note that the petitions must actually be received by the deadline indicated above. A postmark **will not** suffice. TCA §§2-5-103(a) and 2-1-108.

## **Campaign Contribution and Disclosure Reports**

All presidential candidates should contact the Federal Election Commission for information regarding campaign contribution and disclosure reports and filing requirements. The address and phone number is as follows:

Federal Election Commission  
999 E Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20463  
(800) 424-9530

## **Tennessee Election Code**

Copies of the 2005 Tennessee Election Code may be obtained by sending a check for \$51.19 payable to the Secretary of State to the Coordinator of Elections. A returned check/collection agency fee of \$25.00 will be assessed for every check not honored by the bank.