

Lisa Shepherd proposes the following substitute bill:

Candidate Petition Amendments

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Lisa Shepherd

Senate Sponsor: Daniel McCay

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill amends provisions related to candidate nomination petitions.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- requires a candidate seeking the nomination for an elective office by gathering signatures to submit the signatures to the county clerk of the county in which a majority of the signatures are collected;
- for a signature gathering candidate seeking an office where the officeholder is elected by the voters from more than one county, requires each county clerk to which the candidate submits signatures to:
 - verify and count the number of valid signatures submitted by the candidate; and
 - certify the number of valid signatures to the lieutenant governor;
- for an elective office described above, requires the lieutenant governor to:
 - count the total number of valid signatures received from each county clerk; and
 - if the aggregate number of valid signatures is sufficient for the candidate to qualify for placement on the ballot, certify the signatures;
- for a candidate for elective office seeking the nomination of a qualified political party through signature-gathering, moves the deadline for the candidate to submit signatures to an election official from 14 to 21 days before the day on which the party holds a convention to nominate a candidate for the same elective office; and
- makes technical and conforming changes.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

This bill provides a special effective date.

Utah Code Sections Affected:

AMENDS:

20A-1-501, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, First Special Session, Chapter 16

20A-3a-106, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapters 381, 448

20A-6-301, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 39

20A-6-302, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapters 39, 448

20A-6-304, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2021, Chapter 136

20A-9-403, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapters 39, 448

20A-9-405, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 38

20A-9-406, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Second Special Session, Chapter 2

20A-9-408, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Second Special Session, Chapter 2

20A-9-502, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Second Special Session, Chapter 2

20A-9-701, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2015, Chapter 296

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

Section 1. Section **20A-1-501** is amended to read:

20A-1-501 . Candidate vacancies -- Procedure for filling.

(1) As used in this section, "central committee" means:

(a) the state central committee of a political party, for a candidate for:

(i) United States senator, United States representative, governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, state treasurer, or state auditor; or

(ii) state legislator if the legislative district encompasses all or a portion of more than one county; or

(b) the county central committee of a political party, for a party candidate seeking an office, other than an office described in Subsection (1)(a), elected at an election held in an even-numbered year.

(2) Except as provided in Subsection (6), the central committee may certify the name of another candidate to the appropriate election officer if:

(a) for a registered political party that will have a candidate on a ballot in a primary election:

(i) after the close of the period for filing a declaration of candidacy and continuing through the day before the day on which the lieutenant governor provides the list described in Subsection [~~20A-9-403(4)(a)~~] 20A-9-403(9)(a), only one or two candidates from that party have filed a declaration of candidacy for that office and

- 63 one or both dies, resigns as a candidate, or is disqualified as a candidate; and
- 64 (ii) the central committee provides written certification of the replacement candidate
- 65 to the appropriate election officer before the day on which the lieutenant governor
- 66 provides the list described in Subsection [~~20A-9-403(4)(a)~~] 20A-9-403(9)(a);
- 67 (b) for a registered political party that does not have a candidate on the ballot in a
- 68 primary, but will have a candidate on the ballot for a regular general election:
- 69 (i) after the close of the period for filing a declaration of candidacy and continuing
- 70 through the day before the day on which the lieutenant governor makes the
- 71 certification described in Section 20A-5-409, the party's candidate dies, resigns as
- 72 a candidate, or is disqualified as a candidate; and
- 73 (ii) the central committee provides written certification of the replacement candidate
- 74 to the appropriate election officer before the day on which the lieutenant governor
- 75 makes the certification described in Section 20A-5-409; or
- 76 (c) for a registered political party with a candidate certified as winning a primary
- 77 election:
- 78 (i) after the close of the period for filing a declaration of candidacy and continuing
- 79 through the day before the day on which the lieutenant governor makes the
- 80 certification described in Section 20A-5-409, the party's candidate dies, resigns as
- 81 a candidate, or is disqualified as a candidate; and
- 82 (ii) the central committee provides written certification of the replacement candidate
- 83 to the appropriate election officer before the day on which the lieutenant governor
- 84 makes the certification described in Section 20A-5-409.
- 85 (3) If no more than two candidates from a political party have filed a declaration of
- 86 candidacy for an office elected at a regular general election and one resigns to become
- 87 the party candidate for another position, the central committee of that political party may
- 88 certify the name of another candidate to the appropriate election officer.
- 89 (4) Each replacement candidate shall file a declaration of candidacy as required by Chapter
- 90 9, Part 2, Candidate Qualifications and Declarations of Candidacy.
- 91 (5)(a) The name of a candidate who is certified under Subsection (2)(a) after the
- 92 deadline described in Subsection (2)(a)(ii) may not appear on the primary election
- 93 ballot.
- 94 (b) The name of a candidate who is certified under Subsection (2)(b) after the deadline
- 95 described in Subsection (2)(b)(ii) may not appear on the general election ballot.
- 96 (c) The name of a candidate who is certified under Subsection (2)(c) after the deadline

described in Subsection (2)(c)(ii) may not appear on the general election ballot.

(6) A political party may not replace a candidate who is disqualified for failure to timely file a campaign disclosure financial report under Chapter 11, Campaign and Financial Reporting Requirements, or Section 17-70-403.

(7) This section does not apply to a candidate vacancy for a nonpartisan office.

Section 2. Section **20A-3a-106** is amended to read:

20A-3a-106 . Rulemaking authority relating to conducting an election.

The director of elections, within the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, may make rules, in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, establishing requirements for:

- (1) a return envelope, to ensure uniformity and security of the envelopes;
- (2) complying with the signature comparison audit requirements described in Section 20A-3a-402.5;
- (3) conducting and documenting the identity verification process described in Subsection 20A-3a-401(7)(b); or
- (4) establishing specific requirements and procedures for an election officer to:
 - (a) perform the signature comparison audits described in Subsection [~~20A-9-408(9)(e)~~] 20A-9-408(9)(h); or
 - (b) fulfill the chain of custody requirements described in Section 20A-9-408.3.

Section 3. Section **20A-6-301** is amended to read:

20A-6-301 . Manual ballots -- Regular general election.

- (1) Each election officer shall ensure that:
 - (a) all manual ballots furnished for use at the regular general election contain:
 - (i) no captions or other endorsements except as provided in this section;
 - (ii) no symbols, markings, or other descriptions of a political party or group, except for a registered political party that has chosen to nominate its candidates in accordance with Section 20A-9-403; and
 - (iii) no indication that a candidate for elective office has been nominated by, or has been endorsed by, or is in any way affiliated with a political party or group, unless the candidate has been nominated by a registered political party in accordance with Subsection 20A-9-202(4) or Subsection [~~20A-9-403(5)~~] 20A-9-403(10);
 - (b) at the top of the ballot, the following endorsements are printed in 18 point bold type:
 - (i) "Official Ballot for ____ County, Utah";
 - (ii) the date of the election; and

- 131 (iii) the words "certified by the Clerk of _____ County" or, as applicable, the
132 name of a combined office that includes the duties of a county clerk;
- 133 (c) unaffiliated candidates, candidates not affiliated with a registered political party, and
134 all other candidates for elective office who were not nominated by a registered
135 political party in accordance with Subsection 20A-9-202(4) or Subsection [
136 ~~20A-9-403(5)~~] 20A-9-403(10), are listed with the other candidates for the same office
137 in accordance with Sections 20A-6-109 and 20A-6-110, without a party name or title;
- 138 (d) each ticket containing the lists of candidates, including the party name and device,
139 are separated by heavy parallel lines;
- 140 (e) the offices to be filled are plainly printed immediately above the names of the
141 candidates for those offices;
- 142 (f) the names of candidates are printed in capital letters, not less than one-eighth nor
143 more than one-fourth of an inch high in heavy-faced type not smaller than 10 point,
144 between lines or rules three-eighths of an inch apart; and
- 145 (g) on a ticket for a race in which a voter is authorized to cast a write-in vote and in
146 which a write-in candidate is qualified under Section 20A-9-601:
- 147 (i) the ballot includes a space for a write-in candidate immediately following the last
148 candidate listed on that ticket; or
- 149 (ii) for the offices of president and vice president and governor and lieutenant
150 governor, the ballot includes two spaces for write-in candidates immediately
151 following the last candidates on that ticket, one placed above the other, to enable
152 the entry of two valid write-in candidates.
- 153 (2) An election officer shall ensure that:
- 154 (a) each individual nominated by any registered political party under Subsection
155 20A-9-202(4) or Subsection [~~20A-9-403(5)~~] 20A-9-403(10), and no other individual,
156 is placed on the ballot:
- 157 (i) under the registered political party's name, if any; or
- 158 (ii) under the title of the registered political party as designated by them in their
159 certificates of nomination or petition, or, if none is designated, then under some
160 suitable title;
- 161 (b) the names of all unaffiliated candidates that qualify as required in Chapter 9, Part 5,
162 Candidates not Affiliated with a Party, are placed on the ballot;
- 163 (c) the names of the candidates for president and vice president are used on the ballot
164 instead of the names of the presidential electors; and

(d) the ballots contain no other names.

(3) When the ballot contains a nonpartisan section, the election officer shall ensure that:

(a) the designation of the office to be filled in the election and the number of candidates to be elected are printed in type not smaller than eight point;

(b) the words designating the office are printed flush with the left-hand margin;

(c) the words, "Vote for one" or "Vote for up to ____ (the number of candidates for which the voter may vote)" extend to the extreme right of the column;

(d) the nonpartisan candidates are grouped according to the office for which they are candidates;

(e) the names in each group are placed in accordance with Sections 20A-6-109 and 20A-6-110, with the surnames last; and

(f) each group is preceded by the designation of the office for which the candidates seek election, and the words, "Vote for one" or "Vote for up to ____ (the number of candidates for which the voter may vote)," according to the number to be elected.

(4) Each election officer shall ensure that:

(a) proposed amendments to the Utah Constitution are listed on the ballot in accordance with Section 20A-6-107;

(b) ballot propositions submitted to the voters are listed on the ballot in accordance with Section 20A-6-107;

(c) bond propositions that have qualified for the ballot are listed on the ballot under the title assigned to each bond proposition under Section 11-14-206; and

(d) the judicial retention section of the ballot includes a statement at the beginning directing voters to the Judicial Performance Evaluation Commission's website in accordance with Subsection 20A-12-201(4).

Section 4. Section **20A-6-302** is amended to read:

20A-6-302 . Manual ballots -- Placement of candidates' names.

(1) An election officer shall ensure, for manual ballots in regular general elections, that:

(a) each candidate is listed by party, if nominated by a registered political party under Subsection 20A-9-202(4) or Subsection ~~[20A-9-403(5)]~~ 20A-9-403(10);

(b) candidates' surnames are listed in alphabetical order on the ballots when two or more candidates' names are required to be listed on a ticket under the title of an office; and

(c) the names of candidates are placed on the ballot in:

(i) the manner described in Section 20A-6-109; and

(ii) the order described in Section 20A-6-110.

- (2)(a) When there is only one candidate for county attorney at the regular general election in counties that have three or fewer registered voters of the county who are licensed active members in good standing of the Utah State Bar, the county clerk shall cause that candidate's name and party affiliation, if any, to be placed on a separate section of the ballot with the following question: "Shall (name of candidate) be elected to the office of county attorney? Yes ____ No ____."
- (b) If the number of "Yes" votes exceeds the number of "No" votes, the candidate is elected to the office of county attorney.
- (c) If the number of "No" votes exceeds the number of "Yes" votes, the candidate is not elected and may not take office, nor may the candidate continue in the office past the end of the term resulting from any prior election or appointment.
- (d) When the name of only one candidate for county attorney is printed on the ballot under authority of this Subsection (2), the county clerk may not count any write-in votes received for the office of county attorney.
- (e) If no qualified individual files for the office of county attorney or if the candidate is not elected by the voters, the county legislative body shall appoint the county attorney as provided in Section 20A-1-509.2.
- (f) If the candidate whose name would, except for this Subsection (2)(f), be placed on the ballot under Subsection (2)(a) has been elected on a ballot under Subsection (2)(a) to the two consecutive terms immediately preceding the term for which the candidate is seeking election, Subsection (2)(a) does not apply and that candidate shall be considered to be an unopposed candidate the same as any other unopposed candidate for another office, unless a petition is filed with the county clerk before 5 p.m. no later than the day before that year's primary election that:
- (i) requests the procedure set forth in Subsection (2)(a) to be followed; and
 - (ii) contains the signatures of registered voters in the county representing in number at least 25% of all votes cast in the county for all candidates for governor at the last election at which a governor was elected.
- (3)(a) When there is only one candidate for district attorney at the regular general election in a prosecution district that has three or fewer registered voters of the district who are licensed active members in good standing of the Utah State Bar, the county clerk shall cause that candidate's name and party affiliation, if any, to be placed on a separate section of the ballot with the following question: "Shall (name of candidate) be elected to the office of district attorney? Yes ____ No ____."

- (b) If the number of "Yes" votes exceeds the number of "No" votes, the candidate is elected to the office of district attorney.
- (c) If the number of "No" votes exceeds the number of "Yes" votes, the candidate is not elected and may not take office, nor may the candidate continue in the office past the end of the term resulting from any prior election or appointment.
- (d) When the name of only one candidate for district attorney is printed on the ballot under authority of this Subsection (3), the county clerk may not count any write-in votes received for the office of district attorney.
- (e) If no qualified individual files for the office of district attorney, or if the only candidate is not elected by the voters under this subsection, the county legislative body shall appoint a new district attorney for a four-year term as provided in Section 20A-1-509.2.
- (f) If the candidate whose name would, except for this Subsection (3)(f), be placed on the ballot under Subsection (3)(a) has been elected on a ballot under Subsection (3)(a) to the two consecutive terms immediately preceding the term for which the candidate is seeking election, Subsection (3)(a) does not apply and that candidate shall be considered to be an unopposed candidate the same as any other unopposed candidate for another office, unless a petition is filed with the county clerk before 5 p.m. no later than the day before that year's primary election that:
- (i) requests the procedure set forth in Subsection (3)(a) to be followed; and
 - (ii) contains the signatures of registered voters in the county representing in number at least 25% of all votes cast in the county for all candidates for governor at the last election at which a governor was elected.

Section 5. Section **20A-6-304** is amended to read:

20A-6-304 . Regular general election -- Mechanical ballots.

- (1) Each election officer shall ensure that:
- (a) the format and content of a mechanical ballot is arranged in approximately the same order as manual ballots;
 - (b) the titles of offices and the names of candidates are displayed in vertical columns or in a series of separate displays;
 - (c) the mechanical ballot is of sufficient length to include, after the list of candidates:
 - (i) the names of candidates for judicial offices and any other nonpartisan offices; and
 - (ii) any ballot propositions submitted to the voters for their approval or rejection;
 - (d) the office titles are displayed above or at the side of the names of candidates so as to

- 267 indicate clearly the candidates for each office and the number to be elected;
- 268 (e) the party designation of each candidate who has been nominated by a registered
- 269 political party under Subsection 20A-9-202(4) or Subsection [~~20A-9-403(5)~~]
- 270 20A-9-403(10) is displayed adjacent to the candidate's name; and
- 271 (f) if possible, all candidates for one office are grouped in one column or upon one
- 272 display screen.
- 273 (2) Each election officer shall ensure that:
- 274 (a) proposed amendments to the Utah Constitution are displayed in accordance with
- 275 Section 20A-6-107;
- 276 (b) ballot propositions submitted to the voters are displayed in accordance with Section
- 277 20A-6-107;
- 278 (c) bond propositions that have qualified for the ballot are displayed under the title
- 279 assigned to each bond proposition under Section 11-14-206; and
- 280 (d) the judicial retention section of the ballot includes a statement at the beginning
- 281 directing voters to the Judicial Performance Evaluation Commission's website in
- 282 accordance with Subsection 20A-12-201(4).

283 Section 6. Section **20A-9-403** is amended to read:

284 **20A-9-403 . Regular primary elections.**

- 285 (1)(a) Candidates for elective office that are to be filled at the next regular general
- 286 election shall be nominated in a regular primary election by direct vote of the people
- 287 in the manner prescribed in this section. The regular primary election is held on the
- 288 date specified in Section 20A-1-201.5. Nothing in this section shall affect a
- 289 candidate's ability to qualify for a regular general election's ballot as an unaffiliated
- 290 candidate under Section 20A-9-501 or to participate in a regular general election as a
- 291 write-in candidate under Section 20A-9-601.
- 292 (b) Each registered political party that chooses to have the names of the registered
- 293 political party's candidates for elective office featured with party affiliation on the
- 294 ballot at a regular general election shall comply with the requirements of this section
- 295 and shall nominate the registered political party's candidates for elective office in the
- 296 manner described in this section.
- 297 (c) A filing officer may not permit an official ballot at a regular general election to be
- 298 produced or used if the ballot denotes affiliation between a registered political party
- 299 or any other political group and a candidate for elective office who is not nominated
- 300 in the manner prescribed in this section or in Subsection 20A-9-202(4).

(d) Unless noted otherwise, the dates in this section refer to those that occur in each even-numbered year in which a regular general election will be held.

(2)(a) Each registered political party, in a statement filed with the lieutenant governor, shall:

(i) either declare the registered political party's intent to participate in the next regular primary election or declare that the registered political party chooses not to have the names of the registered political party's candidates for elective office featured on the ballot at the next regular general election; and

(ii) if the registered political party participates in the upcoming regular primary election, identify one or more registered political parties whose members may vote for the registered political party's candidates and whether individuals identified as unaffiliated with a political party may vote for the registered political party's candidates.

(b)(i) A registered political party that is a continuing political party shall file the statement described in Subsection (2)(a) with the lieutenant governor no later than 5 p.m. on November 30 of each odd-numbered year.

(ii) An organization that is seeking to become a registered political party under Section 20A-8-103 shall file the statement described in Subsection (2)(a) at the time that the registered political party files the petition described in Section 20A-8-103.

(3)(a) Except as provided in Subsection ~~[(3)(e)]~~ (6), an individual who submits a declaration of candidacy under Section 20A-9-202 shall appear as a candidate for elective office on the regular primary ballot of the registered political party listed on the declaration of candidacy only if the individual is certified by the appropriate filing officer as having submitted a nomination petition that was:

(i) circulated and completed in accordance with Section 20A-9-405; and

(ii) signed by at least 2% of the registered political party's members who reside in the political division of the office that the individual seeks.

(b)(i) A candidate for elective office shall, in accordance with Section 20A-9-408.3, submit ~~[signatures for a nomination petition to the appropriate filing officer for verification and certification]~~ each signature packet for a nomination petition to the county clerk where the majority of the signatures in the packet were collected, no later than 5 p.m. on March 31.

(ii) A candidate may supplement the candidate's submissions at any time on or before

the filing deadline.

(c)(i) The lieutenant governor shall determine for each elective office the total number of signatures that must be submitted under Subsection (3)(a)(ii) or 20A-9-408(8) by counting the aggregate number of individuals residing in each elective office's political division who have designated a particular registered political party on the individuals' voter registration forms on or before November 15 of each odd-numbered year.

(ii) The lieutenant governor shall publish the determination for each elective office no later than November 30 of each odd-numbered year.

(d) The county clerk shall:

(i) consider an active and inactive voter eligible to sign a nomination petition;

(ii) consider an individual who signs a nomination petition a member of a registered political party for purposes of Subsection (3)(a)(ii) if the individual has designated the registered political party as the individual's party membership on the individual's voter registration form;

(iii) except as otherwise provided in Section 20A-21-201, and in accordance with Section 20A-9-408.3, use the procedures described in Section 20A-1-1002 to verify submitted nomination petition signatures in a transparent and orderly manner, or use statistical sampling procedures to verify submitted nomination petition signatures in accordance with rules made under Subsection (7), no later than 14 calendar days after the day on which a candidate submits the signatures to the county clerk; and

(iv) except as provided in Subsection (5), for each qualifying candidate for elective office who submits a nomination petition to the county clerk, issue the certification described in Subsection (3)(a) no later than the deadline described in Subsection 20A-9-202(1)(b).

~~[(d) The filing officer shall:]~~

~~[(i) except as otherwise provided in Section 20A-21-201, and in accordance with Section 20A-9-408.3, verify signatures on nomination petitions in a transparent and orderly manner, no later than 14 calendar days after the day on which a candidate submits the signatures to the filing officer;]~~

~~[(ii) for all qualifying candidates for elective office who submit nomination petitions to the filing officer, issue certifications referenced in Subsection (3)(a) no later than the deadline described in Subsection 20A-9-202(1)(b);]~~

~~[(iii) consider active and inactive voters eligible to sign nomination petitions;]
[(iv) consider an individual who signs a nomination petition a member of a registered
political party for purposes of Subsection (3)(a)(ii) if the individual has designated
that registered political party as the individual's party membership on the
individual's voter registration form; and]
[(v) except as otherwise provided in Section 20A-21-201 and with the assistance of
the county clerk as applicable, use the procedures described in Section 20A-1-1002
to verify submitted nomination petition signatures, or use statistical sampling
procedures to verify submitted nomination petition signatures in accordance with
rules made under Subsection (3)(f).]~~

(4) In reviewing each signature packet, the county clerk shall count and certify only an
individual who signed with a holographic signature, who:

(a) is a registered voter and a resident of the political division for the office that the
candidate seeks to represent; and

(b) did not sign any other nomination petition for that office.

(5)(a) In an election for federal office, constitutional office, or multicounty office, the
county clerk shall, instead of taking the action described in Subsection (3)(d)(iv):

(i) count the number of valid nomination petition signatures submitted by the
candidate; and

(ii) no later than seven calendar days before the day of the deadline described in
Subsection 20A-9-202(1)(b), certify the number of valid signatures to the
lieutenant governor.

(b) The lieutenant governor shall, upon receiving the certification described in
Subsection (5)(a)(ii) from the county clerk of each county where the candidate
submits a signature packet:

(i) add together the total number of signatures declared valid by each county clerk;
and

(ii) if the aggregate number of valid signatures is equal to or more than the total
number of signatures required for the candidate to qualify for placement on the
primary election ballot, issue the certification described in Subsection (3)(a) no
later than the deadline described in Subsection 20A-9-202(1)(b).

(6)[(e)] Notwithstanding any other provision in [this Subsection (3)] Subsection (3), (4),
(5), (7), or (8), a candidate for lieutenant governor may appear on the regular primary
ballot of a registered political party without submitting nomination petitions if the

candidate files a declaration of candidacy and complies with Subsection 20A-9-202
(3).

~~[(f)]~~ (7) In accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, the
director of elections, within the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, may make rules that:

~~[(i)]~~ (a) provide for the use of statistical sampling procedures that:

~~[(A)]~~ (i) filing officers are required to use to verify signatures under Subsection (3)(d);
and

~~[(B)]~~ (ii) reflect a bona fide effort to determine the validity of a candidate's entire
submission, using widely recognized statistical sampling techniques; and

~~[(ii)]~~ (b) provide for the transparent, orderly, and timely submission, verification, and
certification of nomination petition signatures.

~~[(g)]~~ (8) The county clerk shall:

~~[(i)]~~ (a) review the declarations of candidacy filed by candidates for local boards of
education to determine if more than two candidates have filed for the same seat;

~~[(ii)]~~ (b) place the names of all candidates who have filed a declaration of candidacy for a
local board of education seat on the nonpartisan section of the ballot if more than two
candidates have filed for the same seat; and

~~[(iii)]~~ (c) place the local board of education candidates' names on the ballot in accordance
with Sections 20A-6-109 and 20A-6-110.

~~[(4)]~~ (9)(a) Before the deadline described in Subsection 20A-9-409(4)(c), the lieutenant
governor shall provide to the county clerks:

(i) a list of the names of all candidates for federal, constitutional, multi-county, single
county, and county offices who have received certifications under Subsection ~~[(3)]~~
(3)(a), along with instructions on how those names shall appear on the primary
election ballot in accordance with Sections 20A-6-109 and 20A-6-110; and

(ii) a list of unopposed candidates for elective office who have been nominated by a
registered political party under Subsection ~~[(5)(e)]~~ (10)(c) and instruct the county
clerks to exclude the unopposed candidates from the primary election ballot.

(b) A candidate for lieutenant governor and a candidate for governor campaigning as
joint-ticket running mates shall appear jointly on the primary election ballot.

(c) After the county clerk receives the certified list from the lieutenant governor under
Subsection ~~[(4)(a)]~~ (9)(a), the county clerk shall post or publish a primary election notice in
substantially the following form:

"Notice is given that a primary election will be held Tuesday, June _____,

_____(year), to nominate party candidates for the parties and candidates for nonpartisan local school board positions listed on the primary ballot. The polling place for voting precinct ____ is _____. The polls will open at 7 a.m. and continue open until 8 p.m. of the same day.
Attest: county clerk."

~~[(5)]~~ (10)(a) A candidate who, at the regular primary election, receives the highest number of votes cast for the office sought by the candidate is:

- (i) nominated for that office by the candidate's registered political party; or
- (ii) for a nonpartisan local school board position, nominated for that office.

(b) If two or more candidates are to be elected to the office at the regular general election, those party candidates equal in number to positions to be filled who receive the highest number of votes at the regular primary election are the nominees of the candidates' party for those positions.

(c)(i) As used in this Subsection ~~[(5)(e)]~~ (10)(c), a candidate is "unopposed" if:

- (A) no individual other than the candidate receives a certification under Subsection ~~[(3)]~~ (3)(a) for the regular primary election ballot of the candidate's registered political party for a particular elective office; or
- (B) for an office where more than one individual is to be elected or nominated, the number of candidates who receive certification under Subsection ~~[(3)]~~ (3)(a) for the regular primary election of the candidate's registered political party does not exceed the total number of candidates to be elected or nominated for that office.
- (ii) A candidate who is unopposed for an elective office in the regular primary election of a registered political party is nominated by the party for that office without appearing on the primary election ballot.

~~[(6)]~~ (11) The expense of providing all ballots, blanks, or other supplies to be used at any primary election provided for by this section, and all expenses necessarily incurred in the preparation for or the conduct of that primary election shall be paid out of the treasury of the county or state, in the same manner as for the regular general elections.

~~[(7)]~~ (12) An individual may not file a declaration of candidacy for a registered political party of which the individual is not a member, except to the extent that the registered political party permits otherwise under the registered political party's bylaws.

Section 7. Section **20A-9-405** is amended to read:

20A-9-405 . Nomination petitions for regular primary elections.

(1) This section applies to the form and circulation of nomination petitions for regular

primary elections described in Subsection 20A-9-403(3)(a).

(2) A candidate for elective office, ~~[and the agents]~~ or an agent of the candidate, may not circulate nomination petitions until the candidate has submitted a declaration of candidacy in accordance with Subsection 20A-9-202(1).

(3) For the manual candidate qualification process, the nomination petitions shall be in substantially the following form:

(a) the petition shall be printed on paper 8-1/2 inches long and 11 inches wide;

(b) the petition shall be ruled with a horizontal line 3/4 inch from the top, with the space above that line blank for purposes of binding;

(c) the petition shall be headed by a caption stating the purpose of the petition and the name of the proposed candidate;

(d) the petition shall feature the word "Warning" followed by the following statement in no less than eight-point, single leaded type: "It is a class A misdemeanor for anyone to knowingly sign a nomination petition with any name other than the person's own name, or more than once for the same candidate, or if the person is not registered to vote in this state.";

(e) the petition shall feature 10 lines spaced one-half inch apart and consecutively numbered one through 10;

(f) the signature portion of the petition shall be divided into columns headed by the following titles:

(i) Registered Voter's Printed Name;

(ii) Signature of Registered Voter;

(iii) Party Affiliation of Registered Voter;

(iv) Birth Date or Age (Optional);

(v) Street Address, City, Zip Code; and

(vi) Date of Signature; and

(g) a photograph of the candidate may appear on the nomination petition.

(4) For the electronic candidate qualification process, the lieutenant governor shall design an electronic form, using progressive screens, that includes:

(a) the following warning:

"Warning: It is a class A misdemeanor for anyone to knowingly sign a nomination petition with any name other than the person's own name, or more than once for the same candidate, or if the person is not registered to vote in this state."; and

(b) the following information for each individual who signs the petition:

- (i) name;
- (ii) party affiliation;
- (iii) date of birth or age, (optional);
- (iv) street address, city, zip code;
- (v) date of signature;
- (vi) other information required under Section 20A-21-201; and
- (vii) other information required by the lieutenant governor.

(5) For the manual candidate qualification process, if one or more nomination petitions are bound together, a page shall be bound to the nomination petition(s) that features the following printed verification statement to be signed and dated by the petition circulator:

"Verification

State of Utah, County of ____

I, ____, of ____, hereby state that:

I am at least 18 years old;

All the names that appear on the signature sheets bound to this page were, to the best of my knowledge, signed by the persons who professed to be the persons whose names appear on the signature sheets, and each of them signed the person's name on the signature sheets in my presence;

I believe that each has printed and signed the person's name and written the person's street address correctly, and that each signer is registered to vote in Utah."

(6) The lieutenant governor shall prepare and make public model nomination petition forms and associated instructions.

(7) A nomination petition circulator:

- (a) must be at least 18 years old; and
- (b) may affiliate with any political party.

(8) It is unlawful for any person to:

(a) knowingly sign the nomination petition described in this section or Section 20A-9-408:

- (i) with any name other than the person's own name;
- (ii) more than once for the same candidate; or
- (iii) if the person is not registered to vote in this state;

(b) sign the verification of a signature for a nomination petition if the person:

- (i) has not witnessed the signing by those persons whose names appear on the nomination petition; or

(ii) knows that a person whose signature appears on the nomination petition is not registered to vote in this state;

(c) pay compensation to any person to sign a nomination petition; or

(d) pay compensation to any person to circulate a nomination petition, if the compensation is based directly on the number of signatures submitted to a [~~filing officer~~] county clerk rather than on the number of signatures verified or on some other basis.

(9) Any person violating Subsection (8) is guilty of a class A misdemeanor.

(10)(a) A voter who signs a nomination petition may have the voter's signature removed from the petition by, no later than three business days after the day on which the candidate files the petition with the [~~appropriate filing officer~~] county clerk, submitting to the [~~filing officer~~] county clerk a statement requesting that the voter's signature be removed.

(b) A statement described in Subsection (10)(a) shall comply with the requirements described in Subsection 20A-1-1003(2).

(c) The [~~filing officer~~] county clerk shall use the procedures described in Subsection 20A-1-1003(3) to determine whether to remove an individual's signature from a nomination petition after receiving a timely, valid statement requesting removal of the signature.

Section 8. Section **20A-9-406** is amended to read:

20A-9-406 . Qualified political party -- Requirements and exemptions.

The following provisions apply to a qualified political party:

(1) the qualified political party shall, no later than 5 p.m. on the first Monday of October of each odd-numbered year, certify to the lieutenant governor the identity of one or more registered political parties whose members may vote for the qualified political party's candidates and whether unaffiliated voters may vote for the qualified political party's candidates;

(2) the following provisions do not apply to a nomination for the qualified political party:

(a) Subsections 20A-9-403(1) through (3)(b) and Subsections (3)(d)(ii) through [~~(4)(a)~~] (9)(a);

(b) Subsection [~~20A-9-403(5)(e)~~] 20A-9-403(10)(c); and

(c) Section 20A-9-405;

(3) an individual may only seek the nomination of the qualified political party by using a method described in Section 20A-9-407, Section 20A-9-408, or both;

- (4) the qualified political party shall comply with the provisions of Sections 20A-9-407, 20A-9-408, and 20A-9-409;
- (5) notwithstanding Subsection 20A-6-301(1)(a), (1)(e), or (2)(a), each election officer shall ensure that a ballot described in Section 20A-6-301 includes each individual nominated by a qualified political party:
- (a) under the qualified political party's name, if any; or
 - (b) under the title of the qualified registered political party as designated by the qualified political party in the certification described in Subsection (1), or, if none is designated, then under some suitable title;
- (6) notwithstanding Subsection 20A-6-302(1)(a), each election officer shall ensure, for ballots in regular general elections, that each candidate who is nominated by the qualified political party is listed by party;
- (7) notwithstanding Subsection 20A-6-304(1)(e), each election officer shall ensure that the party designation of each candidate who is nominated by the qualified political party is displayed adjacent to the candidate's name on a mechanical ballot;
- (8) "candidates for elective office," defined in Subsection 20A-9-101(1)(a), also includes an individual who files a declaration of candidacy under Section 20A-9-407 or 20A-9-408 to run in a regular general election for a federal office, constitutional office, multicounty office, or county office;
- (9) an individual who is nominated by, or seeking the nomination of, the qualified political party is not required to comply with Subsection 20A-9-201(1)(c);
- (10) notwithstanding [~~Subsection 20A-9-403(3)~~] Subsections 20A-9-403(3) through (8), the qualified political party is entitled to have each of the qualified political party's candidates for elective office appear on the primary ballot of the qualified political party with an indication that each candidate is a candidate for the qualified political party;
- (11) notwithstanding Subsection [~~20A-9-403(4)(a)~~] 20A-9-403(9)(a), the lieutenant governor shall include on the list provided by the lieutenant governor to the county clerks:
- (a) the names of all candidates of the qualified political party for federal, constitutional, multicounty, and county offices; and
 - (b) the names of unopposed candidates for elective office who have been nominated by the qualified political party and instruct the county clerks to exclude such candidates from the primary-election ballot;
- (12) notwithstanding Subsection [~~20A-9-403(5)(e)~~] 20A-9-403(10)(c), a candidate who is

unopposed for an elective office in the regular primary election of the qualified political party is nominated by the party for that office without appearing on the primary ballot; and

- (13) notwithstanding the provisions of Subsections 20A-9-403(1) and (2) and Section 20A-9-405, the qualified political party is entitled to have the names of [its] the qualified political party's candidates for elective office featured with party affiliation on the ballot at a regular general election.

Section 9. Section **20A-9-408** is amended to read:

20A-9-408 . Signature-gathering process to seek the nomination of a qualified political party -- Removal of signature.

- (1) This section describes the requirements for a member of a qualified political party who is seeking the nomination of the qualified political party for an elective office through the signature-gathering process described in this section.
- (2) Notwithstanding Subsection 20A-9-201(7)(a), the form of the declaration of candidacy for a member of a qualified political party who is nominated by, or who is seeking the nomination of, the qualified political party under this section shall be substantially as described in Section 20A-9-408.5.
- (3) Notwithstanding Subsection 20A-9-202(1)(a), and except as provided in Subsection 20A-9-202(4), a member of a qualified political party who, under this section, is seeking the nomination of the qualified political party for an elective office that is to be filled at the next general election shall:
- (a) except to the extent otherwise provided in Subsection (13)(a), during the applicable declaration of candidacy filing period described in Section 20A-9-201.5, and before gathering signatures under this section, file with the filing officer on a form approved by the lieutenant governor a notice of intent to gather signatures for candidacy that includes:
- (i) the name of the member who will attempt to become a candidate for a [registered] qualified political party under this section;
- (ii) the name of the [registered] qualified political party for which the member is seeking nomination;
- (iii) the office for which the member is seeking to become a candidate;
- (iv) the address and telephone number of the member; and
- (v) other information required by the lieutenant governor;
- (b) except as provided in Subsection 20A-9-202(1)(c), file a declaration of candidacy, in

641 person, with the filing officer during the applicable declaration of candidacy filing
642 period described in Section 20A-9-201.5; and

643 (c) pay the filing fee.

644 (4) Notwithstanding Subsection 20A-9-202(2)(a), a member of a qualified political party
645 who, under this section, is seeking the nomination of the qualified political party for the
646 office of district attorney within a multicounty prosecution district that is to be filled at
647 the next general election shall:

648 (a) during the applicable declaration of candidacy filing period described in Section
649 20A-9-201.5, and before gathering signatures under this section, file with the filing
650 officer on a form approved by the lieutenant governor a notice of intent to gather
651 signatures for candidacy that includes:

652 (i) the name of the member who will attempt to become a candidate for a registered
653 political party under this section;

654 (ii) the name of the registered political party for which the member is seeking
655 nomination;

656 (iii) the office for which the member is seeking to become a candidate;

657 (iv) the address and telephone number of the member; and

658 (v) other information required by the lieutenant governor;

659 (b) except as provided in Subsection 20A-9-202(1)(c), file a declaration of candidacy, in
660 person, with the filing officer during the applicable declaration of candidacy filing
661 period described in Section 20A-9-201.5; and

662 (c) pay the filing fee.

663 (5) Notwithstanding Subsection 20A-9-202(3)(a)(iii), a lieutenant governor candidate who
664 files as the joint-ticket running mate of an individual who is nominated by a qualified
665 political party, under this section, for the office of governor shall, during the applicable
666 declaration of candidacy filing period described in Section 20A-9-201.5, file a
667 declaration of candidacy and submit a letter from the candidate for governor that names
668 the lieutenant governor candidate as a joint-ticket running mate.

669 (6) The lieutenant governor shall ensure that the certification described in Subsection
670 20A-9-701(1) also includes the name of each candidate nominated by a qualified
671 political party under this section.

672 (7) Notwithstanding Subsection 20A-9-701(2), the ballot shall, for each candidate who is
673 nominated by a qualified political party under this section, designate the qualified
674 political party that nominated the candidate.

- (8) A member of a qualified political party may seek the nomination of the qualified political party for an elective office by:
- (a) complying with the requirements described in this section; and
 - (b) collecting signatures, on a form approved by the lieutenant governor that complies with Subsection 20A-9-405(3), during the period beginning on the day on which the member files a notice of intent to gather signatures and ending at the applicable deadline described in Subsection (12), in the following amounts:
 - (i) for a statewide race, 28,000 signatures of registered voters in the state who are permitted by the qualified political party to vote for the qualified political party's candidates in a primary election;
 - (ii) except as provided in Subsection (13)(b), for a congressional district race, 7,000 signatures of registered voters who are residents of the congressional district and are permitted by the qualified political party to vote for the qualified political party's candidates in a primary election;
 - (iii) for a state Senate district race, 2,000 signatures of registered voters who are residents of the state Senate district and are permitted by the qualified political party to vote for the qualified political party's candidates in a primary election;
 - (iv) for a state House district race, 1,000 signatures of registered voters who are residents of the state House district and are permitted by the qualified political party to vote for the qualified political party's candidates in a primary election;
 - (v) for a State Board of Education race, the lesser of:
 - (A) 2,000 signatures of registered voters who are residents of the State Board of Education district and are permitted by the qualified political party to vote for the qualified political party's candidates in a primary election; or
 - (B) 3% of the registered voters of the qualified political party who are residents of the applicable State Board of Education district; and
 - (vi) for a county office race, signatures of 3% of the registered voters who are residents of the area permitted to vote for the county office and are permitted by the qualified political party to vote for the qualified political party's candidates in a primary election.
- (9)(a) This Subsection (9) applies only to the manual candidate qualification process.
- (b) In order for a member of the qualified political party to qualify as a candidate for the qualified political party's nomination for an elective office under this section, using the manual candidate qualification process, the member shall:

- 709 (i) collect the signatures on a form approved by the lieutenant governor, using the
710 same circulation and verification requirements described in Sections 20A-7-105
711 and 20A-7-204; and
- 712 (ii) in accordance with Section 20A-9-408.3, submit ~~[the signatures to the election~~
713 ~~officer]~~ each signature packet to the county clerk where the majority of the
714 signatures in the packet were collected, before the applicable deadline described in
715 Subsection (12).
- 716 (c) Upon timely receipt of the signatures described in Subsections (8) and (9)(b), and in
717 accordance with Section 20A-9-408.3, the ~~[election officer]~~ county clerk shall, no
718 later than the earlier of 14 calendar days after the day on which the ~~[election officer]~~
719 county clerk receives the signatures, or ~~[one day]~~ seven calendar days before the day
720 on which the qualified political party holds the convention to select a nominee for the
721 elective office to which the signature packets relate:
- 722 (i) check the name of each individual who completes the verification for a signature
723 packet to determine whether each individual is at least 18 years old;
- 724 (ii) submit the name of each individual described in Subsection (9)(c)(i) who is not at
725 least 18 years old to the attorney general and the county attorney;
- 726 (iii) ~~[with the assistance of the county clerk as applicable,]~~ determine whether each
727 signer is a registered voter who is qualified to sign the petition, using the same
728 method, described in Section 20A-1-1002, used to verify a signature on a petition;
729 and
- 730 (iv) except as provided in Subsection (9)(e), certify whether each name is that of a
731 registered voter who is qualified to sign the signature packet.
- 732 (d) In reviewing each signature packet, the county clerk shall count and certify only an
733 individual who signed with a holographic signature, who:
- 734 (i) is a registered voter and a resident of the political division for the office that the
735 candidate seeks to represent; and
- 736 (ii) did not sign any other petition for that office.
- 737 (e) In an election for federal office, constitutional office, or multicounty office, the
738 county clerk shall, instead of taking the action described in Subsection (9)(c)(iv):
- 739 (i) count the number of valid petition signatures submitted by the candidate; and
740 (ii) no later than seven calendar days before the day of the convention described in
741 Subsection (11)(c), certify the number of valid signatures to the lieutenant
742 governor.

- (f) The lieutenant governor shall, upon receiving the certification described in Subsection (9)(e)(ii) from the county clerk of each county where the candidate submits a signature packet:
- (i) add together the total number of signatures declared valid by each county clerk; and
 - (ii) if the aggregate number of valid signatures is equal to or more than the total number of signatures required for the candidate to qualify for placement on the primary election ballot, certify the signatures no later than the day before the day of the convention described in Subsection (11)(c).
- ~~[(d)]~~ (g)(i) A registered voter who physically signs a form under Subsections (8) and (9)(b) may have the voter's signature removed from the form by, no later than 5 p.m. three business days after the day on which the member submits the signature form to the ~~[election-officer]~~ county clerk, submitting to the ~~[election-officer]~~ county clerk a statement requesting that the voter's signature be removed.
- (ii) A statement described in Subsection ~~[(9)(d)(i)]~~ (9)(g)(i) shall comply with the requirements described in Subsection 20A-1-1003(2).
- (iii) ~~[With the assistance of the county clerk as applicable, the election-officer]~~ The county clerk shall use the procedures described in Subsection 20A-1-1003(3) to determine whether to remove an individual's signature after receiving a timely, valid statement requesting removal of the signature.
- ~~[(e)]~~ ~~(h)~~(i) ~~[An election-officer]~~ A county clerk shall, in accordance with this Subsection ~~[(9)(e)]~~ (9)(h) and rules made under Section 20A-3a-106, conduct regular audits of signature comparisons made between signatures gathered under this section and voter signatures maintained by the ~~[election-officer]~~ county clerk.
- (ii) An individual who conducts an audit of signature comparisons under this section may not audit the individual's own work.
 - (iii) The ~~[election-officer]~~ county clerk shall:
 - (A) audit 1% of all signature comparisons described in Subsection ~~[(9)(e)(i)]~~ (9)(h)(i) to determine the accuracy of the comparisons made;
 - (B) record the individuals who conducted the audit;
 - (C) record the audit results;
 - (D) provide additional training or staff reassignments, as needed, based on the results of an audit described in Subsection ~~[(9)(e)(i)]~~ (9)(h)(i); and
 - (E) record any remedial action taken.

(iv) The audit results described in Subsection ~~[(9)(e)(iii)(C)]~~ (9)(h)(iii)(C) are a public record.

~~[(f)] (i) [An election officer who certifies signatures under Subsection (9)(c) or 20A-9-403(3)(d)]~~ A county clerk who verifies signatures under Subsection (9)(c), Subsection 20A-9-403(3)(d), or Subsection 20A-9-502(5)(b) shall, after ~~[certifying enough signatures]~~ declaring valid enough signatures to establish that a candidate has reached the applicable signature threshold described in ~~[Subsection (8) or 20A-9-403(3)(a)]~~ Subsection (8), Subsection 20A-9-403(3)(a), or Subsection 20A-9-502(5)(a), as applicable, continue to ~~[certify]~~ verify signatures submitted for the candidate in excess of the number of signatures required, until the ~~[election officer]~~ county clerk either:

(i) in a race for federal office, constitutional office, or multicounty office, declares valid signatures equal to 110% of the applicable signature threshold;

(ii) in a race other than a race described in Subsection (9)(i)(i), certifies signatures equal to 110% of the applicable signature threshold; or

~~[(ii)] (iii)~~ (iii) has reviewed all signatures submitted for the candidate before reaching an amount equal to 110% of the applicable signature threshold.

(10)(a) This Subsection (10) applies only to the electronic candidate qualification process.

(b) In order for a member of the qualified political party to qualify as a candidate for the qualified political party's nomination for an elective office under this section, the member shall, before the deadline described in Subsection (12), collect signatures electronically:

(i) in accordance with Section 20A-21-201; and

(ii) using progressive screens, in a format approved by the lieutenant governor, that complies with Subsection 20A-9-405(4).

(c) Upon timely receipt of the signatures described in Subsections (8) and ~~[(9)(b)]~~ (10)(b), the ~~[election officer]~~ county clerk shall, no later than the earlier of 14 calendar days after the day on which the ~~[election officer]~~ county clerk receives the signatures, or ~~[one day]~~ seven calendar days before the day on which the qualified political party holds the convention to select a nominee for the elective office to which the signature packets relate:

(i) check the name of each individual who completes the verification for a signature to determine whether each individual is at least 18 years old; and

- 811 (ii) submit the name of each individual described in Subsection (10)(c)(i) who is not
812 at least 18 years old to the attorney general and the county attorney.
- 813 (11)(a) An individual may not gather signatures under this section until after the
814 individual files a notice of intent to gather signatures for candidacy described in this
815 section.
- 816 (b) An individual who files a notice of intent to gather signatures for candidacy,
817 described in Subsection (3)(a) or (4)(a), is, beginning on the day on which the
818 individual files the notice of intent to gather signatures for candidacy:
- 819 (i) required to comply with the reporting requirements that a candidate for office is
820 required to comply with; and
- 821 (ii) subject to the same enforcement provisions, and civil and criminal penalties, that
822 apply to a candidate for office in relation to the reporting requirements described
823 in Subsection (11)(b)(i).
- 824 (c) Upon timely receipt of the signatures described in Subsections (8) and (9)(b), or
825 Subsections (8) and (10)(b), the election officer shall, no later than the day before the
826 day on which the qualified political party holds the convention to select a nominee
827 for the elective office to which the signature packets relate, notify the qualified
828 political party and the lieutenant governor of the name of each member of the
829 qualified political party who qualifies as a nominee of the qualified political party,
830 under this section, for the elective office to which the convention relates.
- 831 (d) Upon receipt of a notice of intent to gather signatures for candidacy described in this
832 section, the lieutenant governor shall post the notice of intent to gather signatures for
833 candidacy on the lieutenant governor's website in the same location that the
834 lieutenant governor posts a declaration of candidacy.
- 835 (12) The deadline before which a member of a qualified political party must collect and
836 submit signatures to the election officer under this section is 5 p.m. on the last business
837 day that is at least ~~[14]~~ 21 calendar days before the day on which the qualified political
838 party's convention for the office begins.
- 839 (13) For the 2026 election year only, an individual who desires to gather signatures to seek
840 the nomination of a qualified political party for the office of United States representative
841 shall:
- 842 (a) in accordance with Subsection (3)(a), file a notice of intent to gather signatures
843 during the period beginning at 8 a.m. on the first business day of January and ending
844 at 5 p.m. on March 13, 2026; and

(b) during the period beginning on the day on which the individual files the notice of intent to gather signatures and ending at 5 p.m. on March 13, 2026, on a form approved by the lieutenant governor that complies with Subsection 20A-9-405(3), collect 7,000 signatures of registered voters who are residents of the state and are permitted by the qualified political party to vote for the qualified political party's candidates in a primary election.

Section 10. Section **20A-9-502** is amended to read:

20A-9-502 . Certificate of nomination -- Contents -- Circulation -- Verification -- Criminal penalty -- Removal of petition signature.

(1) The candidate shall:

(a) prepare a certificate of nomination in substantially the following form:

"State of Utah, County of _____

I, _____, declare my intention of becoming an unaffiliated candidate for the political group designated as ____ for the office of _____. I do solemnly swear that I can qualify to hold that office both legally and constitutionally if selected, and that I reside at _____ Street, in the city of _____, county of _____, state of _____, zip code _____, phone _____, and that I am providing, or have provided, the required number of holographic signatures of registered voters required by law; that as a candidate at the next election I will not knowingly violate any election or campaign law; that, if filing via a designated agent for an office other than president of the United States, I will be out of the state of Utah during the entire candidate filing period; I will file all campaign financial disclosure reports as required by law; and I understand that failure to do so will result in my disqualification as a candidate for this office and removal of my name from the ballot.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this _____(month\day\year).

Notary Public (or other officer

qualified to administer oaths)";

(b) for each signature packet, bind signature sheets to a copy of the certificate of

nomination and the circulator verification, that:

(i) are printed on sheets of paper 8-1/2 inches long and 11 inches wide;

(ii) are ruled with a horizontal line 3/4 inch from the top, with the space above that line blank for the purpose of binding;

(iii) contain the name of the proposed candidate and the words "Unaffiliated Candidate Certificate of Nomination Petition" printed directly below the horizontal line;

(iv) contain the word "Warning" printed directly under the words described in Subsection (1)(b)(iii);

(v) contain, to the right of the word "Warning," the following statement printed in not less than eight-point, single leaded type:

"It is a class A misdemeanor for anyone to knowingly sign a certificate of nomination signature sheet with any name other than the person's own name or more than once for the same candidate or if the person is not registered to vote in this state and does not intend to become registered to vote in this state before the county clerk certifies the signatures.";

(vi) contain the following statement directly under the statement described in Subsection (1)(b)(v):

"Each signer says:

I have personally signed this petition with a holographic signature;

I am registered to vote in Utah or intend to become registered to vote in Utah before the county clerk certifies my signature; and

My street address is written correctly after my name.";

(vii) contain horizontally ruled lines, 3/8 inch apart under the statement described in Subsection (1)(b)(vi); and

(viii) be vertically divided into columns as follows:

(A) the first column shall appear at the extreme left of the sheet, be 5/8 inch wide, be headed with "For Office Use Only," and be subdivided with a light vertical line down the middle;

(B) the next column shall be 2-1/2 inches wide, headed "Registered Voter's Printed Name (must be legible to be counted)";

(C) the next column shall be 2-1/2 inches wide, headed "Holographic Signature of Registered Voter";

(D) the next column shall be one inch wide, headed "Birth Date or Age (Optional)";

- 908 (E) the final column shall be 4-3/8 inches wide, headed "Street Address, City, Zip
909 Code"; and
- 910 (F) at the bottom of the sheet, contain the following statement: "Birth date or age
911 information is not required, but it may be used to verify your identity with
912 voter registration records. If you choose not to provide it, your signature may
913 not be certified as a valid signature if you change your address before petition
914 signatures are certified or if the information you provide does not match your
915 voter registration records."; and
- 916 (c) bind a final page to one or more signature sheets that are bound together that contains,
917 except as provided by Subsection (3), the following printed statement:
- 918 "Verification
919 State of Utah, County of ____
920 I, _____, of _____, hereby state that:
921 I am at least 18 years old;
922 All the names that appear on the signature sheets bound to this page were signed by
923 persons who professed to be the persons whose names appear on the signature sheets, and each
924 of them signed the person's name on the signature sheets in my presence;
925 I believe that each has printed and signed the person's name and written the person's
926 street address correctly, and that each signer is registered to vote in Utah or will register to
927 vote in Utah before the county clerk certifies the signatures on the signature sheet.
928 _____
- 929 (Signature) (Residence Address) (Date)."[:]
- 930 (2) An agent designated to file a certificate of nomination under Subsection
931 20A-9-503(2)(b) or (4)(b) may not sign the form described in Subsection (1)(a).
- 932 (3)(a) The candidate shall circulate the nomination petition and ensure that the person in
933 whose presence each signature sheet is signed:
- 934 (i) is at least 18 years old; and
935 (ii) verifies each signature sheet by completing the verification bound to one or more
936 signature sheets that are bound together.
- 937 (b) A person may not sign the circulator verification if the person signed a signature
938 sheet bound to the verification.
- 939 (4)(a) It is unlawful for any person to:
- 940 (i) knowingly sign a certificate of nomination signature sheet:
941 (A) with any name other than the person's own name;

- 942 (B) more than once for the same candidate; or
- 943 (C) if the person is not registered to vote in this state and does not intend to
- 944 become registered to vote in this state before the county clerk certifies the
- 945 signatures; or
- 946 (ii) sign the verification of a certificate of nomination signature sheet if the person:
- 947 (A) has not witnessed the signing by those persons whose names appear on the
- 948 certificate of nomination signature sheet; or
- 949 (B) knows that a person whose signature appears on the certificate of nomination
- 950 signature sheet is not registered to vote in this state and does not intend to
- 951 become registered to vote in this state.
- 952 (b) Any person violating this Subsection (4) is guilty of a class A misdemeanor.
- 953 (5)(a) To qualify for placement on the general election ballot, the candidate shall, no
- 954 earlier than the start of the applicable declaration of candidacy period described in
- 955 Section 20A-9-201.5 and no later than 5 p.m. on June 15 of the year in which the
- 956 election will be held:
- 957 (i) comply with Subsection 20A-9-503(1); and
- 958 (ii) submit each signature packet to the county clerk where the majority of the
- 959 signatures in the packet were collected, with signatures totaling:
- 960 (A) at least 1,000 registered voters residing within the state when the nomination
- 961 is for an office to be filled by the voters of the entire state; or
- 962 (B) at least 300 registered voters residing within a political division or at least 5%
- 963 of the registered voters residing within a political division, whichever is less,
- 964 when the nomination is for an office to be filled by the voters of any political
- 965 division smaller than the state.
- 966 (b) A candidate has not complied with Subsection (5)(a)(ii), unless the county clerks
- 967 verify that each required signature is a valid signature of a registered voter who is
- 968 eligible to sign the signature packet and has not signed a signature packet to nominate
- 969 another candidate for the same office.
- 970 (c) In reviewing the signature packets, the county clerk shall count and certify only those
- 971 persons who signed with a holographic signature, who:
- 972 (i) are registered voters within the political division for the office that the candidate
- 973 seeks to represent; and
- 974 (ii) did not sign any other certificate of nomination for that office.
- 975 (d) ~~[The]~~ Except as provided in Subsection (6), the county clerk shall count and certify

the number of registered voters who validly signed a signature packet, no later than 30 calendar days after the day on which the candidate submits the signature packet.

(e) The candidate may supplement the signatures or amend the certificate of nomination or declaration of candidacy at any time on or before 5 p.m. on June 15 of the year in which the election will be held.

(f) The county clerk shall use the procedures described in Section 20A-1-1002 to determine whether a signer is a registered voter who is qualified to sign the signature packet.

(6)(a) In an election for federal office, constitutional office, or multicounty office, the county clerk shall, instead of taking the action described in Subsection (5)(d):

(i) count the number of valid nomination petition signatures submitted by the candidate; and

(ii) no later than the day of the deadline described in Subsection (5)(e), certify the number of valid signatures to the lieutenant governor.

(b) The lieutenant governor shall, upon receiving the certification described in Subsection (6)(a)(ii) from the county clerk of each county where the candidate submits a signature packet:

(i) add together the total number of signatures declared valid by each county clerk; and

(ii) if the aggregate number of valid signatures is equal to or more than the total number of signatures required for the candidate to qualify for placement on the general election ballot, certify the signatures no later than August 1 of the year on which the election will be held.

~~[(6)]~~ (7)(a) A voter who signs a signature packet under this section may have the voter's signature removed from the signature packet by, no later than 5 p.m. three business days after the day on which the candidate submits the signature packet to the county clerk, submitting to the county clerk a statement requesting that the voter's signature be removed.

(b) A statement described in Subsection ~~[(6)(a)]~~ (7)(a) shall comply with the requirements described in Subsection 20A-1-1003(2).

(c) The county clerk shall use the procedures described in Subsection 20A-1-1003(3) to determine whether to remove an individual's signature from a signature packet after receiving a timely, valid statement requesting removal of the signature.

Section 11. Section **20A-9-701** is amended to read:

1010 **20A-9-701 . Certification of party candidates to county clerks -- Display on ballot.**

1011 (1) No later than August 31 of each regular general election year, the lieutenant governor
1012 shall certify to each county clerk, for offices to be voted upon at the regular general
1013 election in that county clerk's county:

1014 (a) the names of each candidate nominated under Subsection 20A-9-202(4) or
1015 Subsection [~~20A-9-403(5)~~] 20A-9-403(10); and

1016 (b) the names of the candidates for president and vice president that are certified by the
1017 registered political party as the party's nominees.

1018 (2) The names shall be certified by the lieutenant governor and shall be displayed on the
1019 ballot as they are provided on the candidate's declaration of candidacy. No other names
1020 may appear on the ballot as affiliated with, endorsed by, or nominated by any other
1021 registered political party, political party, or other political group.

1022 Section 12. **Effective Date.**

1023 This bill takes effect on January 1, 2027.