

Municipal Office Vacancy Modifications

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Andrew Stoddard

Senate Sponsor:

LONG TITLE**General Description:**

This bill modifies the process for filling a vacancy in a municipal office.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- defines terms;
- modifies the process for filling a vacancy in a municipal office and for breaking ties in the voting of a municipal legislative body; and
- makes technical and conforming changes.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None

Utah Code Sections Affected:**AMENDS:**

20A-1-510, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapters 90, 448

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

Section 1. Section **20A-1-510** is amended to read:

20A-1-510 . Midterm vacancies in municipal offices.

~~[(1)(a) As used in this section:]~~

~~[(i) "Vacancy," subject to Subsection (1)(a)(ii), means the same as that term is defined in Section 20A-1-102.]~~

~~[(ii) "Vacancy," if due to resignation, occurs:]~~

~~[(A) for a municipal executive, on the effective date of an irrevocable letter of resignation submitted by the municipal executive to the municipal legislative body; or]~~

~~[(B) for a member of a municipal legislative body, on the effective date of an~~

31 irrevocable letter of resignation submitted by the member to the municipal
32 legislative body.]

33 [(b) Except as otherwise provided in this section, if any vacancy occurs in the office of
34 municipal executive or member of a municipal legislative body, the municipal
35 legislative body shall, within 30 calendar days after the day on which the vacancy
36 occurs, appoint a registered voter in the municipality who meets the qualifications for
37 office described in Section 10-3-301 to fill the unexpired term of the vacated office.]

38 [(c) Before acting to fill the vacancy, the municipal legislative body shall:]

39 [(i) immediately notify the municipal recorder or clerk;]

40 [(ii) give public notice of the vacancy at least 14 calendar days before the day on
41 which the municipal legislative body meets to fill the vacancy;]

42 [(iii) identify, in the notice:]

43 [(A) the date, time, and place of the meeting where the vacancy will be filled;]

44 [(B) the person to whom an individual interested in being appointed to fill the
45 vacancy may submit the interested individual's name for consideration; and]

46 [(C) the deadline for submitting an interested individual's name; and]

47 [(iv) in an open meeting, interview each individual whose name is submitted for
48 consideration, and who meets the qualifications for office, regarding the
49 individual's qualifications.]

50 [(d)(i) The municipal legislative body shall take an initial vote to fill the vacancy
51 from among the names of the candidates interviewed under Subsection (1)(c)(iv).]

52 [(ii)(A) If no candidate receives a majority vote of the municipal legislative body
53 in the initial vote described in Subsection (1)(d)(i), the two candidates that
54 received the most votes in the initial vote, as determined by the tie-breaking
55 procedures described in Subsections (1)(d)(ii)(B) through (D) if necessary,
56 shall be placed before the municipal legislative body for a second vote to fill
57 the vacancy.]

58 [(B) If the initial vote results in a tie for second place, the candidates tied for
59 second place shall be reduced to one by a coin toss conducted in accordance
60 with Subsection (1)(d)(ii)(D), and the second vote described in Subsection
61 (1)(d)(ii)(A) shall be between the candidate that received the most votes in the
62 initial vote and the candidate that wins the coin toss described in this
63 Subsection (1)(d)(ii)(B).]

64 [(C) If the initial vote results in a tie among three or more candidates for first

- 65 place, the candidates tied for first place shall be reduced to two by a coin toss
 66 conducted in accordance with Subsection (1)(d)(ii)(D), and the second vote
 67 described in Subsection (1)(d)(ii)(A) shall be between the two candidates that
 68 remain after the coin toss described in this Subsection (1)(d)(ii)(C).]
- 69 [(D) A coin toss required under this Subsection (1)(d) shall be conducted by the
 70 municipal clerk or recorder in the presence of the municipal legislative body.]
- 71 [(iii) If, in the second vote described in Subsection (1)(d)(ii)(A), neither candidate
 72 receives a majority vote of the municipal legislative body, the vacancy shall be
 73 determined by a coin toss between the two candidates in accordance with
 74 Subsection (1)(d)(ii)(D).]
- 75 [(e) If the municipal legislative body does not timely comply with Subsections (1)(b)
 76 through (d), the municipal clerk or recorder shall immediately notify the lieutenant
 77 governor.]
- 78 [(f) After receiving notice that a municipal legislative body has failed to timely comply
 79 with Subsections (1)(b) through (d), the lieutenant governor shall:]
- 80 [(i) notify the municipal legislative body of the violation; and]
- 81 [(ii) direct the municipal legislative body to, within 30 calendar days after the day on
 82 which the lieutenant governor provides the notice described in this Subsection
 83 (1)(f), appoint an eligible individual to fill the vacancy in accordance with
 84 Subsections (1)(c) and (d).]
- 85 [(g) If the municipality fails to timely comply with a directive described in Subsection
 86 (1)(f):]
- 87 [(i) the lieutenant governor shall notify the governor of the municipality's failure to
 88 fill the vacancy; and]
- 89 [(ii) the governor shall, within 45 calendar days after the day on which the governor
 90 receives the notice described in Subsection (1)(g)(i), provide public notice
 91 soliciting candidates to fill the vacancy in accordance with Subsection (1)(e) and
 92 appoint an individual to fill the vacancy.]
- 93 (1) As used in this section:
- 94 (a) "Letter of resignation" means:
- 95 (i) a letter submitted to a municipal legislative body by a municipal executive, that:
- 96 (A) states that the municipal executive is resigning from office, effective
 97 immediately; or
- 98 (B) specifies a future date on which the municipal executive is resigning from

- 99 office, and states that the letter of resignation is irrevocable; or
- 100 (ii) a letter submitted to a municipal legislative body by a member of the municipal
- 101 legislative body, that:
- 102 (A) states that the member is resigning from office, effective immediately; or
- 103 (B) specifies a future date on which the member is resigning from office, and
- 104 states that the letter of resignation is irrevocable.
- 105 (b)(i) "Vacancy," subject to Subsection (1)(b)(ii), means the same as that term is
- 106 defined in Section 20A-1-102.
- 107 (ii) "Vacancy," if due to a resignation, occurs on:
- 108 (A) for a municipal executive:
- 109 (I) the day on which the municipal executive submits a letter described in
- 110 Subsection (1)(a)(i)(A); or
- 111 (II) the future date specified in a letter described in Subsection (1)(a)(i)(B); or
- 112 (B) for a member of a municipal legislative body:
- 113 (I) the day on which the member submits a letter described in Subsection
- 114 (1)(a)(ii)(A); or
- 115 (II) the future date specified in a letter described in Subsection (1)(a)(ii)(B).
- 116 (2) Except as otherwise provided in this section, if a vacancy occurs, or irrevocably will
- 117 occur, in the office of municipal executive or member of a municipal legislative body,
- 118 the municipal legislative body shall, in accordance with the requirements of this section,
- 119 within 30 calendar days after the day on which the municipal legislative body receives
- 120 the letter of resignation, appoint a registered voter in the municipality who meets the
- 121 qualifications for office described in Section 10-3-301 to fill the unexpired term of the
- 122 vacated office.
- 123 (3) Before acting to fill a vacancy in a municipal office, the municipal legislative body shall:
- 124 (a) immediately notify the municipal recorder or clerk of the vacancy;
- 125 (b) give public notice of the vacancy at least 14 calendar days before the day on which
- 126 the municipal legislative body meets to fill the vacancy;
- 127 (c) identify, in the notice:
- 128 (i) the date, time, and place of the meeting where the vacancy will be filled;
- 129 (ii) the person to whom an individual interested in being appointed to fill the vacancy
- 130 may submit the interested individual's name for consideration; and
- 131 (iii) the deadline for submitting an interested individual's name;
- 132 (d) in an open meeting, interview each individual whose name is submitted for

consideration, and who meets the qualifications for office, regarding the individual's qualifications; and

(e) subject to Subsection (6)(c), before the meeting described in Subsection (3)(d), pass a resolution or ordinance identifying a fair and transparent method that the municipal body will use:

(i) in the event of a tie between three or more candidates, to eliminate candidates, by lot, where each tied candidate has an equal chance of elimination, until only two candidates remain; or

(ii) in the event that one candidate receives the most votes, but not a majority of the votes, and two or more candidates tie for receiving the second most votes, to eliminate candidates tied for receiving the second most votes, by lot, where each tied candidate has an equal chance of elimination, until only one of the tied candidates remains.

(4)(a) The municipal legislative body shall take an initial vote to fill the vacancy from among the names of the candidates interviewed under Subsection (3)(d).

(b) If no candidate receives a majority vote of the municipal legislative body in the initial vote described in Subsection (4)(a), the municipal legislative body shall:

(i) take another vote between the two candidates who received the most votes in the initial vote; or

(ii) subject to Subsection (6)(c), if, due to a tie, the municipal legislative body cannot identify only two candidates as receiving the most votes in the initial vote, take another vote between the two candidates who remain after applying the applicable method identified under Subsection (3)(e).

(c) If, in the second vote described in Subsection (4)(b), neither candidate receives a majority vote of the municipal legislative body, the vacancy shall be determined by a coin toss between the two candidates.

(d) The breaking of a tie by lot under Subsection (4)(b)(ii), or by coin toss under Subsection (4)(c), shall be conducted by the municipal clerk or recorder, at a public meeting, in the presence of the municipal legislative body.

(5)(a) If the municipal legislative body does not timely comply with Subsections (2) through (4), the municipal clerk or recorder shall immediately notify the lieutenant governor.

(b) After receiving notice that a municipal legislative body has failed to timely comply with Subsections (2) through (4), the lieutenant governor shall:

- 167 (i) notify the municipal legislative body of the failure; and
168 (ii) direct the municipal legislative body to, within 30 calendar days after the day on
169 which the lieutenant governor provides the notice described in this Subsection
170 (5)(b), appoint an eligible individual to fill the vacancy in accordance with
171 Subsections (3) and (4).
- 172 (c) If the municipality fails to timely comply with a directive described in Subsection
173 (5)(b):
- 174 (i) the lieutenant governor shall notify the governor of the municipality's failure to
175 timely fill the vacancy; and
- 176 (ii) the governor shall, within 45 calendar days after the day on which the governor
177 receives the notice described in Subsection (5)(c)(i):
- 178 (A) provide public notice soliciting candidates to fill the vacancy in accordance
179 with Subsections (3)(b) and (c); and
- 180 (B) appoint an individual to fill the vacancy.
- 181 (6)(a) An individual appointed under this section to fill a vacancy in the office of
182 municipal executive or member of a municipal legislative body shall take office on
183 the later of:
- 184 (i) the day after the individual is appointed; or
185 (ii) the day after the day on which the vacancy occurs.
- 186 (b) A majority vote under Subsections (3) through (5):
- 187 (i) means a majority of the members currently serving on the municipal legislative
188 body;
- 189 (ii) includes a member described in Subsection (1)(a)(ii)(B) if the vote is taken before
190 the date of vacancy specified in the letter; and
- 191 (iii) includes the mayor, if the mayor has legal authority under Subsection
192 10-3b-302(1) to break a tie, unless the mayor seeks, and is under consideration, to
193 fill the vacancy.
- 194 (c) A municipal legislative body, or the governor, may not appoint the individual who
195 vacated the office to fill the vacancy.
- 196 [(2)] (7)(a) A vacancy in the office of municipal executive or member of a municipal
197 legislative body shall be filled by an interim appointment, followed by an election to
198 fill a two-year term, if:
- 199 (i) the vacancy occurs, or a letter of resignation is received, by the municipal
200 executive at least 14 calendar days before the deadline for filing for election in an

- 201 odd-numbered year; and
- 202 (ii) two years of the vacated term will remain after the first Monday of January
- 203 following the next municipal election.
- 204 (b) In appointing an interim replacement, the municipal legislative body shall:
- 205 (i) comply with the notice requirements of this section; and
- 206 (ii) in an open meeting, interview each individual whose name is submitted for
- 207 consideration, and who meets the qualifications for office, regarding the
- 208 individual's qualifications.
- 209 ~~[(3)]~~ (8)(a) In a municipality operating under the council-mayor form of government, as
- 210 defined in Section 10-3b-102:
- 211 (i) the council may appoint an individual to fill a vacancy in the office of mayor
- 212 before the effective date of the mayor's resignation by making the effective date of
- 213 the appointment the same as the effective date of the mayor's resignation; and
- 214 (ii) if a vacancy in the office of mayor occurs before ~~[the effective date of an~~
- 215 ~~appointment under Subsection (1) or (2)]~~ the vacancy is filled under Subsection
- 216 (6)(a), to fill the vacancy, the remaining council members, by majority vote, shall
- 217 appoint a council member to serve as acting mayor during the time between the
- 218 creation of the vacancy and the effective date of the appointment to fill the
- 219 vacancy.
- 220 (b) A council member serving as acting mayor under Subsection ~~[(3)(a)(ii)]~~ (8)(a)(ii)
- 221 continues to:
- 222 (i) act as a council member; and
- 223 (ii) vote at council meetings.
- 224 ~~[(4)]~~ (9)(a)(i) For a vacancy of a member of a municipal legislative body as
- 225 described in this section, the municipal legislative body member whose
- 226 resignation creates the vacancy on the municipal legislative body may:
- 227 ~~[(A)]~~ (i) interview an individual whose name is submitted for consideration under
- 228 Subsection ~~[(1)(e)(iv) or (2)(b)(ii)]~~ (3)(d) or (7)(b)(ii); and
- 229 ~~[(B)]~~ (ii) vote on the appointment of an individual to fill the vacancy.
- 230 ~~[(ii)]~~ (b) Notwithstanding Subsection ~~[(4)(a)(i)]~~ (9)(a), a member of a legislative body
- 231 who is removed from office in accordance with state law may not cast a vote under
- 232 Subsection ~~[(4)(a)(i)]~~ (9)(a).
- 233 ~~[(b)]~~ (c) A member of a municipal legislative body who submits ~~[his or her]~~ the member's
- 234 resignation to the municipal legislative body may not rescind the resignation.

[~~(e)~~] (d) A member of a municipal legislative body may not vote on an appointment under this section for [~~himself or herself~~] that member to fill a vacancy in the municipal legislative body.

[~~(5)~~] (10) In a municipality operating under the council-mayor form of government, the mayor may not:

- (a) participate in the vote to fill a vacancy;
- (b) veto a decision of the council to fill a vacancy; or
- (c) vote in the case of a tie.

[~~(6)~~] (11) A mayor whose resignation from the municipal legislative body is due to election or appointment as mayor may, in the case of a tie, participate in the vote under this section.

[~~(7)~~] (12) A municipal legislative body may, consistent with the provisions of state law, adopt procedures governing the appointment, interview, and voting process for filling vacancies in municipal offices.

[~~(8)~~] (13)(a) Except as provided in Subsection [~~(8)~~](b), an individual seeking appointment to fill a vacancy under this section shall, no later than the deadline for the individual to file a campaign finance statement under Section 10-3-208:

(i) complete a conflict of interest disclosure statement in accordance with Section 10-3-301.5; and

(ii) submit the conflict of interest disclosure statement to the municipal legislative body and the municipal clerk or recorder.

(b) An individual described in Subsection [~~(8)~~](a) (13)(a) is not required to comply with Subsection [~~(8)~~](a) (13)(a) if the individual:

(i) currently holds an office described in Subsection [~~(1)~~](b) (2);

(ii) already, that same year, filed a conflict of interest disclosure statement for the office described in Subsection [~~(8)~~](b)(i) (13)(b)(i), in accordance with Section 10-3-1313; and

(iii) no later than the deadline described in Subsection [~~(8)~~](a) (13)(a), indicates, in a written notice submitted to the municipal clerk or recorder, that the conflict of interest disclosure statement described in Subsection [~~(8)~~](b)(ii) (13)(b)(ii) is updated and accurate as of the date of the written notice.

[~~(9)~~] (14)(a) The municipal clerk or recorder shall make each conflict of interest disclosure statement made by an individual described in Subsection [~~(8)~~](a) (13)(a) available for public inspection by posting an electronic copy of the statement on:

(i) the municipality's website; or

(ii) if the municipality does not have a website, on the website of the county in which the municipality is located.

(b) The municipal clerk or recorder shall:

(i) post the electronic statement described in Subsection [~~(9)(a)~~] (14)(a) no later than two business days after the day on which the municipal recorder or clerk receives the statement; and

(ii) ensure that the electronic statement remains posted on the website described in Subsection [~~(9)(a)~~] (14)(a) for at least 10 calendar days after the day on which the municipal legislative body appoints an individual to fill the vacancy.

Section 2. Effective Date.

This bill takes effect on May 6, 2026.