ARA-16.01 – Election of Candidates – Candidate Filing and Procedures

A. Purpose

In 2022, voters amended the City Charter to use ranked choice voting as the method of electing candidates and updated the City's form of government. Chapter 3, Article 1 of the Charter (General Procedures) and Chapter 2.08 of the Portland City Code (Election of Candidates) set the method and requirements for electing city candidates and filing for office. The Auditor's Administrative Rules set forth additional clarification and requirements.

B. Authority

Charter Section 2-506 authorizes the Auditor's Office to adopt, amend, and repeal administrative rules to carry out the Auditor's Office's duties.

C. Methods for Filing to be on the Ballot Text

Candidates may file to be on the ballot by one of the following two methods beginning on the first day to file for office, in accordance with state law:

1. **Declaration of Candidacy**. To file by Declaration of Candidacy, candidates must:
    a. Complete a candidate filing application (AUD 120 Form); and
    b. Pay a filing fee or receive approval of a fee waiver request, as set forth in Section D. 2 below.
2. **Nominating Petition**. To file by Nominating Petition, candidates must:
    a. Complete a candidate filing application (AUD 120 Form); and
    b. Collect required signatures on a nominating petition signature sheet approved by the City Elections Officer in writing.

D. Filing by Declaration of Candidacy: Payment of Filing Fee or by Approval of a Fee Waiver

For a candidate to be considered to have completed the process of filing for candidacy, the City Elections Division must receive payment in full. Candidates seeking to file with a fee waiver must first complete the process in subsection 2 and obtain approval of qualification for a fee waiver from the Elections Division before submitting a Declaration of Candidacy.

1. For candidates filing by Declaration of Candidacy and fee, who are not seeking a fee waiver:

    a. The filing fee is:

        i. $250 for candidates running for Councilor; and

        ii. $500 for candidates running for Auditor or Mayor

    b. The amounts in this section shall be adjusted on January 1 of each odd-numbered year to reflect price inflation as published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and rounded to the nearest dollar.

    c. Payment can be received through:

        i. The payment portal provided on the Auditor's website;

        ii. Paid in person at the City Elections Division by cash or check; or

        iii. By mailing a check to the City Elections Division. All checks must be made payable to "City of Portland Elections."

2. For candidates filing by Declaration of Candidacy and who are seeking a fee waiver:

    a. A fee waiver may be requested due to economic hardship on a form provided by the Auditor's Office. It must be filed and approved prior to filling out a candidacy filing application (AUD 120 Form).

        i. The Auditor's Office will grant a fee waiver if both of the following requirements are met by the candidate:

            1. On a form provided by the Auditor's Office, the candidate must confirm and disclose receipt of an income-based benefit or tax exemption from a government entity or transit

authority in the last 12 months prior to the date of the filing of the fee waiver; and

2. Attest on a form provided by the Auditor, pursuant to ORS 26.715 (Prohibited Conduct) and ORS 260.993 (Criminal Penalties), that the candidate is unable to pay the fee due to economic hardship experienced individually and by members of the household, if any.

E. Filing by Nominating Petition: Signature Requirements for All Elective Offices

1. The signature requirement for City of Portland candidates filing for office by nominating petition is set by state law in ORS 249.072 (Requirements Regarding Number and Distribution of Persons Signing Nonpartisan Petitions). The number of required validated signatures is whichever is less of:

    a. 500 signatures or

    b. One percent of votes cast in the electoral district for all candidates for governor (at the most recent election at which a candidate for governor was elected to a full term).

2. Signatures must be collected from registered voters of the relevant electoral district and validated by the City Elections Division, in partnership with the County, to qualify towards the signature threshold.

F. Reporting Official Results in a Candidate Election

The Auditor or the Auditor's designee shall submit to City Council a Report of Official Elections Results for each election. The report shall:

1. Use results from county abstract(s) of votes for the City of Portland.

2. List each office up for election, candidates qualified to the ballot, and corresponding results for each candidate and measure. The report shall include only official results and clearly list individuals elected to office and measures approved or rejected by voters.

3. Be presented to Council within 12 business days of the City Elections Division receiving the abstract of votes from county elections offices.

Auditor’s Office Administrative Rule Information

Questions about this administrative rule may be directed to the City Elections Office.

Auditor’s Office Administrative Rule History

Adopted by the City Auditor on November 1, 2023.

Amended by the City Auditor on December 1, 2025.