

INFORMATION REGARDING THE NOVEMBER 8, 2016 ELECTION

What is the Candidate Guide?

Under Section 2-2-6 of the City Code, the Office of the City Clerk is required to make available to the public a cost-free candidate guide in hard copy as well as online in an electronic format that is readily reproducible. This Candidate Guide includes information regarding campaign contribution and expenditure limits, campaign finance, campaign treasurer, copies of forms required by state law and the City Code, election calendar, miscellaneous information, and additional election resources. The first day this Candidate Guide will be available for the November 8, 2016 election is May 6, 2016.

What are the relevant dates associated with the November election?

The Election Calendar, found in the Candidate Guide and also on the website of the Office of the City Clerk, provides a detailed listing of dates related to election activities and requirements.

What are the eligibility requirements for council members?

A candidate for city council from a council district must meet all eligibility requirements of state law, and must have resided continuously in the state for 12 months and in the council district from which the member is seeking election for 6 months immediately preceding the 2016 regular filing deadline (for a council candidate's application for a place on the ballot. "Immediately preceding" means the day before the deadline. The regular filing deadline for a council candidate's application for a place on the ballot for the November 8, 2016 election is August 22, 2016.

Residency deadlines are:

12 months: August 21, 2015

6 months: February 21, 2016

What is the deadline for filing an application for a place on the ballot? What is the first date an application for a place on the ballot may be filed?

The deadline for a council candidate to file an application for a place on the ballot for the November 8, 2016 election is August 22, 2016 at 5:00 p.m.

Under Section 143.007 of the Texas Election Code, the first day a candidate may file an application for a place on the ballot for the November 8, 2016 election is Monday, July 25, 2016. The statutory date falls on Saturday, July 23, but the Secretary of State has confirmed that "regular business hours" of the City

Clerk's office prevail, and the filing start date is therefore moved to the next regular business day which is Monday, July 25.

When can a candidate or committee accept political contributions?

Under the City Charter, Article III, Section 8, a candidate for mayor or city council, or a candidate's committee, may not solicit or accept a political contribution except during the last 180 days before an election for mayor or council member. Before the 180-day period, a candidate may only spend personal funds for campaign purposes. Prior to accepting political contributions or making campaign related expenditures, a Campaign Treasurer must be designated. The first day an officeholder, candidate or candidate's committee may solicit or accept political contributions is May 12, 2016.

What is the filing fee for filing an application for a place on the ballot?

The filing fee for an application for a place on the ballot is \$500.00. Alternatively, a person may file a petition in lieu of the \$500.00 fee. Petitions filed in lieu of the filing fee must meet the following requirements:

- Must be signed by registered voters residing in the particular district.
- No signer can endorse more than one candidate running within a district.
- Must have a specific number of verified signatures and may not be supplemented.
- Affidavit of each circulator must be notarized.
- Number of signatures required on petitions in lieu of the filing fee for each district up for election in 2016:
 - District 2: 45 signatures
 - District 4: 43 signatures
 - District 6: 82 signatures
 - District 7: 104 signatures
 - District 10: 147 signatures

In what order will names appear on the ballot?

The Council districts to be filled shall be placed on the ballot in numerical order. The order in which the candidates' names appear on the ballot is determined by a drawing conducted by the City Clerk at which

each candidate or his/her named representative may be present. Please refer to the Election Calendar for the date, time, and location of such drawing.

What is the difference between council terms and tenure?

The council term is set by City Charter; tenure is based on the number of days in office and is based on the date a member is sworn in.

Pursuant to Article III, Section 2 (C) of the City Charter, the regular term of a council member begins on the date set by ordinance. Ordinance No. 20141023-007 establishes the start date of a council member's term as the sixth day of January following the City's general election. Therefore, the term for council members elected at the November 8, 2016 election will start January 6, 2017.

What are the yearly salaries of the mayor and council members?

As of May 2016:

Mayor - \$84,864.00

Council Member - \$72,176.00

For information, please refer to Ordinance No. [20061116-081](#).

Note: Article VXi, Section 40(b) of the [Texas Constitution](#) prohibits a state employee from receiving a salary for serving on a local government body.

What are the campaign contribution limit amounts?

Article III, Section 8(A)(1) and 8(A)(3) of the City Charter require campaign finance limits to be modified annually with the adoption of the budget to increase or decrease in accordance with the most recently published Federal Government, Bureau of Labor Statistics Indicator, Consumer Price Index U.S. City Average (CPI-W U.S. City Average). Using the current CPI, the campaign contribution limit amount is \$350.00, and the aggregate contribution limit is modified to \$36,000.00 per regular election and \$24,000.00 per runoff election.

Do I need to appoint a campaign treasurer if I am not going to raise any money?

Yes. The law requires every candidate to file a campaign treasurer appointment, even if the candidate does not intend to raise or spend money. You are allowed to appoint yourself as your treasurer.

Do I still have to file reports if I chose modified reporting on my treasurer appointment?

By selecting the modified reporting schedule, you are indicating that you plan to stay under the \$500.00 threshold in either contributions or expenditures in connection with an election. The modified reporting schedule exempts you from filing 30-day and 8-day pre-election reports. If you have selected the modified reporting schedule, you must still report activity during the entire period you were a candidate, either on a semiannual report or on a final report. Please note that the payment of a filing fee is not considered when calculating whether a filer has exceeded \$500.00 in expenditures.

What happens if I select modified reporting and then exceed \$500?

If you select modified reporting and exceed \$500.00 (in either contributions or expenditures in connection with an election) before the 30-day pre-election report is due, you must file required 30-day and 8-day pre-election reports. Keep in mind that unopposed candidates are not required to file these reports regardless of their level of activity. If you exceed a \$500.00 threshold after the 30-day pre-election report is due, you must file an “exceeded \$500 report” within 48 hours of exceeding the threshold and, if the threshold is exceeded before the 8-day pre-election report is due, you must file the 8-day pre-election report.

What is the deadline for filing the voluntary Candidate Contract under City Code 2-2-11?

The deadline is not specifically tied to a date. The deadline for filing the voluntary “campaign contract” delineated in City Code 2-2-11 is the **earlier** of (1) 30 days after he or she becomes a candidate under the Texas Election Code; or (2) the date the candidate files for a place on the ballot. For additional information, please refer to the Texas Election Code and the City Clerk’s document entitled “Candidate and Officeholder Brochure on Campaign Finance.”

What are the reporting requirements for candidates?

Please refer to the Candidate Packet and to the Election Calendar for specific details.

Campaign Treasurer Form: (This form may be filed at any time but must be filed prior to any contributions or expenditures)

Semiannual Report of Campaign Contributions: (Hard copy required to be filed, **along with the required structured data file**). Deadline is July 15, 2016 at 5:00 p.m.

Public Statement of Financial Information: Deadline is August 29, 2016 at 4:45 p.m. (City of Austin Form)

Personal Financial Statement Form: Deadline is September 12, 2016 at 5:00 p.m.

Statement of Contributions and Expenditures (30th Day Before Election Report): (Hard copy required to be filed, **along with the required structured data file**). Deadline is October 11, 2016 at 5:00 p.m.

Statement of Contributions and Expenditures (8th Day Before Election Report): (Hard copy required to be filed, **along with the required structured data file**.) Deadline is October 31, 2016 at 5:00 p.m.

Statement of Campaign Contributions and Expenditures (Runoff Election): (Hard copy required to be filed, **along with the required structured data file**). Deadline is December 8, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. (Required only for candidates involved in a runoff election).

City of Austin Pre-Election Reports: (**Electronic copy filed in accordance with instructions provided by the City Clerk**). Must be filed each time a candidate accepts contributions that total more than \$10,000 during the period beginning the 9th day before the date of an election and ending at 5:00 p.m. on the day before the election. This report includes loans and/or expenditures from personal funds.

Semiannual Report of Campaign Contributions and Expenditures: (Hard copy required to be filed, **along with the required structured data file**). Deadline is January 15, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.

Forms and instructions may be found at <http://www.ethics.state.tx.us/filinginfo/localcofrm.htm>.

Campaign Finance Guide for Candidates and Officeholders may be found at http://www.ethics.state.tx.us/guides/COH_local_guide.htm.

Title 15, Election Code (Regulating Political Funds and Campaigns) may be found at <http://www.ethics.state.tx.us/statutes/title15.html>.

City of Austin Campaign Finance Reporting Requirements

Pursuant to City Code, Section 2-2-26, every candidate or office holder who raised more than \$10,000 in contributions or signed a campaign finance contract, or a political committee who is required by the City Code or state law to file a campaign finance report with the city clerk, shall, in addition to the required report, provide to the city clerk a structured data file containing the contents of the campaign finance report. **The data file must be provided to the city clerk no later than the date that the associated campaign finance report must be filed.**

More information and templates can be found at <http://austintexas.gov/page/campaign-finance-forms>.

What is bundling?

“Bundling” is defined as an individual soliciting and obtaining contributions on a candidate’s behalf and delivering the contributions to the candidate. Soliciting, obtaining, and delivering contributions by any means, including in person or via electronic transmission, constitutes bundling for the City’s purposes. Note: City Code, Section 2-2-22 does not consider it as bundling for an individual to hold a fundraiser at his or her home if the event raises less than \$5,000.00.

How is bundling reported?

If an individual gathers \$200.00 or more per person from five or more persons on a city candidate's behalf, the candidate receiving the bundled funds completes an additional form with information provided by the bundler (Form ATX5: Bundling Report) and attaches it to the Candidate/Officeholder Campaign Finance Report (Form C/OH) that he or she files with the City Clerk. See below for limitations on bundling by city lobbyist. [Click here for copies of the Campaign Finance Forms.](#)

What are the limitations on bundling by city lobbyist?

In each campaign period, bundling by city lobbyists is limited to five times the individual contribution limit per candidate, and bundling by members of certain lobbying-related entities is limited to ten times the individual contribution limit per candidate. In 2016, the individual contribution limit is \$350.00; therefore the city lobbyist bundling limit per candidate is \$1,750.00 and the lobbying-related entities bundling limit per candidate is \$3,500.00. See City Code, Section 2-2-22 for information. Note: city lobbyists and their spouses may not donate more than \$25.00 to a city candidate. See City Code, Section 2-2-53 for information.

Where can I find Council district maps and demographic information?

[City of Austin maps and demographics](#)

Where can I find voter information?

First day to apply (by mail or fax) for an early ballot by mail is September 9, 2016.

Last day for submitting a voter registration application to vote in the November 8, 2016 election is October 10, 2016.

First day of early voting by personal appearance is October 24, 2016.

Deadline for receiving applications by mail or fax for ballot to be voted by mail is October 28, 2016.

Last day for regular early voting by personal appearance is November 4, 2016.

Election Day is November 8, 2016.

Runoff Election Day is December 13, 2016.

For more information on voting, to register to vote, or to verify your voter registration status, please contact the appropriate county:

Travis County: www.traviscountytax.org/goVoters.do

Williamson County:

www.wilco.org/CountyDepartments/Elections/VoterRegistration/tabid/592/Default.aspx

Photo ID Now Required for Voting in Person. [Read more about these requirements here.](#)