



Libertarian Party of Indiana

Quick Guide

How Does a Libertarian Candidate Get Placed on the Ballot?

This is a broad view of the process. When seeking office, a candidate should ALWAYS seek out the Chairman of a party for the specifics of filing for an office. Contacting your county clerk and the Indiana Election Division are also strongly encouraged.

The Libertarian Party of Indiana is a unique political party legally in Indiana. It is the only party considered a “minor political party” because it has garnered more than 2% in the Secretary of State race. Because it has not yet achieved 10% in the Secretary of State race, the party does not hold a primary which is reserved for “major political parties.”

Primaries are often incorrectly assumed to be elections for the entire voting public. They are actually considered closed party business in the eyes of election law. Republicans, Democrats, and Independents cannot participate in the other’s business. Only Republicans should choose Republican candidates for a general election and the same for Democrats.

So if Libertarian Party members legally cannot yet hold a primary, how are candidates chosen?

The Libertarian Party of Indiana and its county affiliates hold nominating conventions. If one is seeking a statewide office like Secretary of State or a General Assembly office, one should plan to notify the State Chair, State Executive Director, or County Chair by the time and date set in the Convention’s agenda and standing rules. All Federal House and Senate, General Assembly spots, statewide offices, all judges (except town judges), and county prosecutors are selected at the state convention. Most county, city, town, town judges or township races are selected at a county convention.

The candidate for nomination will then go before the delegates of the convention to make their case. Some candidates may have competition for the nomination. Some candidates may not. Delegates have the chance to vote for their favorite candidate, or for none of the above. Attending the convention as a delegate, and the voting process, are both outlined in the Party’s bylaws and the conventions standing rules.

Once the delegates have spoken, the winner of the vote, the Chairman and Secretary of either the State or County Party will then fill out a CAN-23 and/or CAN-22. These documents notify the Indiana Election Division and the County Election Board that the winning nominee should be placed on the ballot as a Libertarian Candidate!

The State and County Party also can fill vacancies on a ballot between the nominating convention and the deadline for filling vacancies set by the Indiana Election Division. County Conventions are generally held in March. The State Convention is generally held in April. The vacancy deadline is usually set in late June or Early July. Once this deadline has passed, the opportunity to run as a candidate has ended for that election cycle. All offices for November general elections operate off of these deadlines. Candidates seeking a school board position should contact their county clerk. These elections are held during the primary election.

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