

Run for Local Office: Getting Started Guide

Before you decide

The Basics

What office interests you?

When is the next election?

Why are you running?

Considerations before you make your decision.

Political

Your “base”

Who supports your run?

Does this match Democratic Party primary voters?

What organizations would support your candidacy?

Anything that might be a problem.

Have you supported other local candidates?

Who will work for your campaign?

Do I need a campaign manager, treasurer, etc.

Financial Issues

Can you afford to run?

How much does the office pay?

Can you afford to serve, if elected?

Funding your own campaign

Raising money

Family

Is your family part of your campaign?

Geographic Issues

Running for a countywide office requires a lot of driving.

Make sure you are eligible (live in the district) for the office you seek.

Understanding Cochise County Political Demographics

Party Registration deficit for Democrats

History of Democrats winning

Large number of voters not registered in a political party (Independents)

Homework

1. Write an “elevator pitch” three sentences on why you are running.
2. List five issues that you consider important for the office you seek.
3. Pick three and write 200 words on your position on each of those issues.
4. Create a biography that includes personal, community and political items.
5. Talk to three people about your intention to run to get feedback.

Dates of Interest

4/29/23 – West End Fair – Sierra Vista – Democrats will have a booth

6/17/23 Bisbee Pride parade

7/4/23 – July 4th parades and festivities at various venues

January 2024 – Petition signature requirements will be published.

March 5., 2024 (approx.) Petitions can be filed for primary candidates

April 6, 2024 (approx.) Petitions must be in for primary candidates

June 2024 (approx.) Petitions in for 2024 general election candidates (such as Sierra Vista City Council)

8/6/24 - Party primary elections

11/5/24 – General Election

Next Steps (if you run)

Note: As you will see below it is imperative that you get direct information from the proper agency before you run. Always good to talk to someone. The county as a robust website for candidates running. Cities, special districts, school districts may not.

Don't assume anything, laws change rapidly, and websites or internet info may be out of date.

File Statement of Intent to Run

For **county offices**, go to Cochise County Elections website <https://cochise.az.gov/292/Elections>
And download Statement of Intent to Run

For SV City Council and other cities contact the City Clerk, Jill Adams
Jill.Adams@sierravistaaz.gov

For **School Districts** contact County Superintendent of Instruction

Setup a Campaign Committee (if you receive or spend more than \$1,400)

For county offices this is Statement of Organization

Note: Check with city clerk for city offices – they may use a different form

File Financial Disclosure Statement

County offices this is available on the website

City offices, School Districts check with the appropriate person

For County offices only!

File Conflict of Interest Statement – available on the website

Get your nomination petitions.

Important that you use the proper form for the office you seek. The county doesn't have a recommended petition format, candidates use the standard one provided on the Arizona Secretary of State's website.

THE COCHISE PROJECT

It is probable that the city also uses the AZ SOS petition. Call the AZ SOS office to get a PDF copy of the nonpartisan petition. It is not currently available on their website. (I can provide one, but please check to make sure it can be used.)

Read the instructions for circulating petitions BEFORE you start to circulate them.

DO NOT CIRCULATE PETITIONS UNTIL YOU HAVE FILED THE PROPER PAPERWORK WITH EITHER THE COUNTY, CITY CLERK OR WHOMEVER.

Online Petition Signatures

The county Recorder's office will help county candidates setup their online petition gathering through the Arizona Secretary of State's candidate portal.

City council candidates should check with their city clerk to see if their city will participate in this process. Sierra Vista does allow for online petitions.

Get a campaign email address

Free is fine – Gmail or Hotmail – just make sure you have easy access to it and put on two factor authentication. Later you can setup auto forwarding to someone on your campaign team that handles communication.

Setup social media campaign pages

Facebook for sure, possibly Twitter and Instagram if you have the right tech skills or others to administrate pages. Make sure that you have administrator rights to each and that only you can change admins.

Setup a campaign website

Many campaign consultants don't believe websites are of any value. However, many people will go looking for your website. Your website can also be the place where you put a long biography and resume as well as position papers. Facebook and other social media platforms do not work well for lengthy content.

You can do a free website at Wordpress.com or low cost websites at other vendors. Make sure that whatever one you pick, that the tools to build your website are included and easy to use.