

San Juan County Elections 2026 Local Voters' Guide Administrative Rules for Ballot Measure Statements

(amended September 2025)



SAN JUAN
COUNTY
WASHINGTON

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Purpose

Local voters' guides provide the citizens of San Juan County with information about candidates and ballot measures. A printed voters' pamphlet is distributed to registered voters for every election. It is available in print and on our website.

These Administrative Rules establish the requirements for participation in the guides by local jurisdictions and advocacy committees.

Local jurisdictions sponsoring ballot measures are responsible for providing explanatory statements and for appointing advocacy committees for and against the measure. Advocacy committees provide statements advocating approval or rejection of ballot measures. Important information regarding deadlines and format for

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Deadline

All resolutions must be received by San Juan County Elections no later than 4:30 pm on the day of the deadline. Submitting a resolution in advance of the deadline is advantageous to the district, as it allows time for the Elections office to review the submission and inform the district of any missing information.

Important Dates 2026 Elections

Election Date=>	February 10 Special Election	April 28 Special Election	August 4 Primary Election	November 3 General Election
Deadline				
Resolution deadline Deadline to file a resolution with the County Auditor to place a measure on the ballot	Dec 12	Feb 27	May 1	August 4
Appointment of advocacy committees deadline Deadline for jurisdictions to appoint committees to write advocacy statements for and against approval of a ballot measure	Dec 12	Feb 27	May 1	August 4
Statement deadline Deadline to submit explanatory statements and advocacy statements for a ballot measure	Dec 19	Mar 6	May 8	August 11

What to Submit

What to submit - jurisdictions

Resolutions calling for an election by a jurisdiction shall be submitted on or before the resolution deadline established by state law. Resolutions calling for a special election in February or April must be submitted at least 60 calendar days prior to the election date. Resolutions calling for an election in conjunction with the primary or general election must be submitted by the established deadlines for those elections.

Check-off List

- Resolution Cover Sheet: Name, telephone number, and email of one person to serve as liaison with Elections staff regarding any statement questions. Form is on page 9 of this booklet and on the Elections website.
- Official ballot title, as prepared or approved by the County Prosecuting Attorney.
- Explanatory statement prepared by the sponsoring jurisdiction or its attorney, or by the County Prosecuting Attorney for County ballot measures.
- Names and contact information of advocacy committee members.

How to submit a resolution

To place a measure on the ballot, submit the resolution to Elections by email, mail, or in-person. A Resolution Cover Sheet **must** accompany each resolution. This cover sheet contains important contact information required by the Elections Division. A Resolution Cover Sheet is available on the Elections website (sanjuancountywa.gov/elections, under Taxing Districts) and on page 9 of this publication.

Upon receipt of the cover sheet and resolution, the Elections Division will send an acknowledgment notice to the jurisdiction's contact person. The resolution and explanatory statement will be posted on the Elections website.

Withdrawing a resolution

If a jurisdiction wishes to withdraw a resolution, the jurisdiction must do so in writing no later than 7 business days after the submission deadline. A new resolution withdrawing the previously submitted resolution must be submitted to San Juan County Elections.

Alternatively, the jurisdiction could add withdrawal language to the submitted resolution (Example: If Prop 1 passes in the Primary this resolution shall be withdrawn).

What to submit—committees

- Advocacy Committee Form: Name and contact information of one committee member to serve as liaison with Elections staff regarding any questions about the statement.
 - Name of the advocacy committee (optional), names of the committee members who will “sign” the advocacy statement, and campaign phone, email(s) and/or website address to be published for voters to obtain more information. Note: Committees may include up to three members, though they may seek the advice of any other person(s). (RCW 29A.32.280)
 - Advocacy statement for and against passage of the measure.

Appointment of Committees

Deadlines for advocacy committee appointments:

February 10 Special - December 12, 2025

April 28 Special - February 27, 2026

August 4 Primary - May 1, 2026

November 3 General - August 4, 2026

Advocacy committee appointments

It is the responsibility of the legislative authority of a local jurisdiction submitting a ballot measure to formally appoint committees to prepare arguments advocating approval of a measure and rejection of a measure for the local voters' guides. The authority must appoint persons known to favor the measure to serve on the committee advocating approval and, whenever possible, must appoint persons known to oppose the measure to serve on the committee advocating rejection. (RCW 29A.32.280)

Committee members must be a resident of San Juan County or own property in San Juan County.

A diligent effort must be made by the district to appoint a committee "for" and a Committee "Against" the measure. At least three of the following should be attempted.

- Posting on District's website
- Submitting a news release or letter to editor
- Putting up flyers on bulletin boards
- Making direct phone calls to potential individuals
- Recruiting at District events

If the legislative authority is unable to make advocacy committee appointments, the responsibility to make the appointments falls to the County Auditor. Therefore, the Auditor may begin to search for argument writers, particularly for writers who oppose the measure, prior to the district's deadline for appointing committees.

Each committee may have no more than three members; however, a committee may seek the advice of any other person(s).

At the time of committee appointment, the legislative authority should provide the committees the voters' guides rules. The rules can be downloaded from the Elections website: www.sanjuancountywa.gov/elections under Taxing Districts.

Submit committee information to Elections

Upon appointment of the advocacy committees, the legislative authority should immediately submit to Elections the Advocacy Committee Form with the names and contact information of the committee members. Elections staff will then work with committees regarding voters' guide submissions. Please complete the Advocacy Committee Form on page 10.

Explanatory Statement Guidelines

Deadlines for explanatory statements:

February 10 Special - December 19, 2025

April 28 Special - March 6, 2026

August 4 Primary - May 8, 2026

November 3 General - August 11, 2026

The attorney for the jurisdiction sponsoring the ballot measure, or the Prosecuting Attorney for County measures, will prepare and submit the explanatory statement to the Elections office. Statements written and submitted by jurisdictions themselves will be forwarded to the Prosecuting Attorney's office for review. Any changes suggested by the Prosecuting Attorney will be returned to the jurisdiction for concurrence prior to publication.

Jurisdictions should notify the Elections office as soon as possible if they will not be submitting a statement so that Elections staff can arrange with the Prosecuting Attorney for statement preparation. A copy of the Prosecuting Attorney's statement will be provided to the jurisdiction prior to publication.

Explanatory statements consist of the following elements:

- The official ballot title of the measure
- A neutrally-worded explanatory statement explaining the law regarding the ballot measure as it currently exists and the fiscal effect that the ballot measure will have if approved

The following general guidelines will apply to explanatory statements:

- The name of the jurisdiction and the name of the designated contact person who will serve as the liaison with Elections staff should appear at the top of the statement document. This information does not count toward the word limit.
- **Word limit: 300 words.** Manually count the number of words in your statement, using the guidelines below. If your statement exceeds the word limit you will be notified by email and asked to correct it.
- Use block paragraph style for your statement (no paragraph indents).
- Do not use tables, bullets, lists, or other material requiring multiple paragraphs or formatting.
- You may use italics to emphasize specific words or statements. Do not use bold, underline, or all capitals.
- Hyphenated words will count as two words unless the hyphenation is listed as one word in dictionary.com.
- Numbers will count as one word (e.g. "1,000,000"). However, "1 million" or "one million" will count as two words.
- Two words with a slash between them will count as two words (e.g., "public/private" or "\$0.22/\$1,000").

NOTE: See page 7 for more information regarding statements.

Committee Statement Guidelines

Deadlines for advocacy committee statements:

February 10 Special - December 19, 2025

April 28 Special - March 6, 2026

August 4 Primary - May 8, 2026

November 3 General - August 11, 2026

Contact information

Please complete the Advocacy Committee Form:

- Name and contact information of one committee member to serve as liaison with the Elections staff regarding any questions about the statement.
- The advocacy committee's name (if applicable).
- The names of up to three committee members.
- Optional: Relevant "identifiers" may be submitted that will follow the names of each member. Up to 3 words are allowed (e.g., John Doe, Committee Chair, School Board Member).
- Contact phone, email(s) and/or campaign website.

The committee name, names of members, and the contact information for the campaign will be published in the "Argument prepared by" section following the statement and do not count toward the word limit.

Be sure that campaign contact email(s) and website address are functional when statement is submitted.

Statement word limit: 250 words.

Committees are responsible for observing the word limit. Manually count the number of words in your statement using the guidelines provided. If your statement exceeds the word limit, your designated liaison will be notified by email and asked to correct it. Only deletions will be allowed. No changes or additions will be allowed.

If the statement length is not corrected by the committee, all material in excess of the word limit will be omitted. If that deletion creates an incomplete sentence at the end of the statement, that incomplete sentence will be omitted. There are no exceptions to these limitations.

The following guidelines will apply to advocacy statements:

- Do not use tables, bullets, lists, or other material requiring multiple paragraphs or formatting.
- Use block paragraph style for your statement (no paragraph indents).
- Elections staff reserves the right to eliminate excessive paragraph returns if the statement does not fit in the space provided.
- You may use italics to emphasize specific words or statements. Do not use bold, underline, or all-caps for emphasis.
- Hyphenated words will count as two words unless the hyphenation is listed as one word in dictionary.com.
- Numbers will count as one word (e.g. "1,000,000"). However, "1 million" or "one million" will count as two words.
- Two words with a slash between them will count as two words (e.g., "public/private" or "\$0.22/\$1,000").
- Obscene, profane, libelous, or defamatory language will be rejected.

Disclaimer

Thoroughly proofread your materials and correct any spelling, typographical, or grammatical errors prior to submitting.

The following statement will appear at the bottom of each page where advocacy statements appear: "The San Juan County Auditor is not responsible for the content of statements or arguments (WAC 434-381-180)."

Rebuttal statements

Rebuttal statements are not allowed.

More about Statements

Rejected statements and appeal process

Any statement that is libelous or otherwise inappropriate will be rejected. If any portion of your statement is rejected, only that rejected portion may be re-written and submitted for inclusion in the final statement.

If your statement, or any portion thereof, has been rejected because it contains what the Elections Manager believes are libelous statements or otherwise inappropriate material, the advocacy committee liaison will be notified in writing and/or by email not more than five business days following the statement submission. You will have until the day following receipt of the notice to do one of the following:

- Appeal that determination to the County Auditor, in writing, citing reasons why you believe the statement is not libelous or otherwise inappropriate; **or**
- Submit a re-written statement for only the portion found objectionable.

The County Auditor will consider any appeals. After consideration of the Elections Manager's written notice and the advocacy committee's appeal statement, the County Auditor will make a final determination.

Proof copies

Elections staff will email a proof copy of your statement to the liaison contact listed on your resolution cover sheet prior to publication of the voters' guide.

Fees

No fee shall be charged to committees for submitting statements to be included in the online voters' guide or local voters' pamphlet.

The total cost of the Local Voters' Pamphlet shall be considered an election cost to those local jurisdictions included in the pamphlet, and the cost shall be prorated in the manner provided in RCW 29A.04.410. (RCW 29A.32.270)

Public viewing of statements

After the official deadline for submission of statements has passed, the statements become public record. At that time, they are available for viewing by the public upon request to the Elections office.

Notice of Intent to Publish a Local Voters' Pamphlet (RCW 29A.32.220)

The County Auditor will notify all jurisdictions within the county of the intent to publish and distribute a local voters' pamphlet not later than 90 days before the publication and distribution of the pamphlet. A memo and information will be sent in October and in March via email to the district's contact on file with the Election Division.

Inclusion in the Local Voters' Pamphlet (RCW 29A.32.220)

All districts with a race or measure on the ballot will participate in the local voters' pamphlet. A printed pamphlet will be published for all elections.

Distribution of the Local Voters' Pamphlet

The local voters' pamphlets will be distributed to each active registered voter in each district that has information included in the pamphlet.

Voters' Pamphlet Costs

Costs of Participating in Election

RCW 29A.04.410; RCW 29A.32.270

Each jurisdiction is responsible for paying its proportionate share of election costs. San Juan County will bill the jurisdiction directly for these costs.

The State Auditor's Office has established uniform procedures for allocating election costs to each jurisdiction based upon its registered voter population as a percentage of registered voters in all jurisdictions participating in that election.

Election costs vary from one election to the next depending on a variety of factors. However, the number of participating jurisdictions and their respective size is the primary variable. For example, an election shared by three jurisdictions will likely cost more per voter than an election with ten jurisdictions. Special elections in February and April are often shared by a smaller number of jurisdictions. Thus, the proportionate share of the cost is often greater, and in some cases may be 100% of the cost (e.g., a single jurisdiction election).

A specific cost or quote cannot be provided in advance of an election. The cost allocation is dependent upon the number of jurisdictions and registered voters participating in the election. Estimates can be provided and will be based on a reasonable range, taking into account historical information and specific known information about a particular election date.

The preparation of a local voters' pamphlet is an election cost. It is prorated, charged, and billed to local jurisdictions in the same manner as other election costs.

If a mandatory recount is required for a candidate in a jurisdiction, the cost of the recount is billed to the jurisdiction.



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Resolution Cover Sheet	Date Received
This form must accompany each resolution submitted. Contact person or persons should have the authority to approve changes and be available to answer questions.	

District Name: _____

Proposition No and Title _____

District Information

Contact Person: _____ Title: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

District Billing Address: _____

Attorney Information

Attorney for District: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email : _____

Has your attorney prepared this ballot measure? YES No

Has your attorney prepared the explanatory statement? YES No

Date of Election: _____

Type of Election (levy, bond, lid lift etc.): _____

Please state the pass/fail requirement for this measure (i.e., Simply Majority, 60%, etc.) as determined by your legal counsel, together with applicable statutory references:

Submit to: elections@sanjauncountywa.gov



ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

District Name: _____

Proposition No. and Title _____

Contact Person: _____

Contact Email: _____ Contact Phone Number: _____

Jurisdiction’s responsibility:

1. Email completed form to elections@sanjuancountywa.gov by the resolution submittal deadline.
2. Provide committee member with statement requirements and deadlines.

Committees are solely responsible for submitting voters’ pamphlet statements to the Elections office in accordance with the specified timeline for that election.

Questions? elections@sanjuancountywa.gov or (360) 378-3357

Note: The email addresses listed below will not be published unless the “Yes” box is checked.

Appointment of	<input type="checkbox"/> For Committee	<input type="checkbox"/> Against Committee	(1-3 Members)
Website (optional):			Published in Voters’ Pamphlet
Committee Name (optional):			Published in Voters’ Pamphlet
1st Committee Member			
Name:			
Email:			Publish in Voters’ Guide? Check if YES <input type="checkbox"/>
2nd Committee Member			
Name:			
Email:			Publish in Voters’ Guide? Check if YES <input type="checkbox"/>
3rd Committee Member			
Name:			
Email:			Publish in Voters’ Guide? Check if YES <input type="checkbox"/>