



City of Atascadero
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

GENERAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION

November 3, 2026

FILING INFORMATION

Candidate Qualifications:

To be eligible to run for office, a candidate must be a resident of the City of Atascadero *and* a registered voter at the time he/she pulls Nomination Papers. Both qualifications must be met.

Please note that a person convicted of certain types of felonies shall not be a candidate and is not eligible for election to office. Please refer to California Elections Code §20 for more information regarding this restriction.

Nomination Filing Dates:

Nomination Papers are available, by appointment, from the City Clerk's Office from July 15, 2026, to August 7, 2026. Your Nomination Papers must be filed with the City Clerk no later than **5:00 p.m. on Friday, August 7, 2026.**

If an incumbent does not file, the nomination period will be extended by the City Clerk for a period of five additional days. The last day to file, if the nomination period is extended, will be Wednesday, August 12, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.

There is a **\$25.00 filing fee**, which is to be paid upon the filing of the Nomination Papers. The Nomination Papers, Candidate's Statement of Qualifications, and all other election documentation must be filed at the same time.

Setting Candidate Appointments:

Prospective candidates must schedule an appointment with the City Clerk's Office prior to the issuance of any nomination documents and when filing the Nomination Papers. Please call the City Clerk's Office at (805) 470-3400 to make a candidate appointment for the issuance and subsequent filing of Nomination Papers.

Prior to returning nominations papers, candidates will need to provide evidence of meeting the qualifications for the office they choose to file papers for.

Circulating and Signing Nomination Papers:

Any registered voter who is a candidate for any elected office may obtain signatures and sign his or her own Nomination Papers. The candidate's signature shall be given the same effect as that of any other qualified signer.

Each candidate shall be proposed by not less than 20 and nor more than 30 currently registered voters who are residents of the City of Atascadero. The City Clerk's Office will certify each signature on the petition within 30 days following the close of the nomination period. Petitions are not open to public inspection until after the nomination period has closed.

Filing the Nomination Paper:

The Declaration of Circulator (on the back of the Nomination Paper) must be signed by the person who circulated the petition. (In most cases, this is the candidate him/herself). Circulators shall be 18 years of age or older and only one circulator may circulate the nomination paper.

The candidate need not file the Nomination Papers personally, however, the "Affidavit of Nominee" must be signed before the City Clerk, a Deputy City Clerk or a notary public.

Withdrawal of Nomination Paper:

No candidate may withdraw as a candidate after **5:00 p.m. on August 7, 2026**.

If an incumbent does not file, the nomination period will be extended by the City Clerk for a period of five additional days. The last day to withdraw, if the nomination period is extended, will be **August 12, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.**

Candidate's Ballot Designation:

The ballot designation is the word, or words, which will appear on the ballot under the candidate's name. No more than three words may be used designating the profession, vocation or occupation of the candidate. If you are unsure about a proper designation, please refer to the information provided during the candidate appointment or contact the City Clerk's Office for additional information.

The City Clerk shall NOT accept a ballot designation which:

1. Misleads the voter.
2. Suggests an evaluation of a candidate, such as "outstanding", "leading", "expert", "virtuous", or "eminent".
3. Uses the word or prefix, such as "former" or "ex", which means a prior status. The only exception is the use of the word "retired."
4. Uses the name of any political party.
5. Uses a word(s) referring to a racial, religious, or ethnic group.
6. Uses a title or degree appearing on the same line as the candidate's name.

For additional information on acceptable designations, please refer to Election Code §§ 13107, 13107.3, 13107.5 and California Code of Regulations § 20711.

Ballot Order of Candidates:

The Secretary of State determines, by random drawing, the order in which candidates are listed on the ballot. The drawing will be conducted on **August 13, 2026**. The City Clerk will be notified of the order and will publish a Notice of Nominees in the local newspaper. The City Clerk's Office will also notify the Candidates of the order by email.

Candidate's Statement of Qualifications:

Candidates may choose to submit a Candidate's Statement of Qualifications (Candidate's Statement) to the voter. The form is provided, but it is optional. If a candidate chooses not to publish a Candidate's Statement, he/she must sign the decline form also provided and return it to the City Clerk's Office when returning the Nomination Papers.

The maximum number of words permitted in the Candidate's Statement is 200. Guidelines for computing word count are found in the packet of information provided by the City Clerk's Office during the candidate appointment. The statement should be single spaced, double spaced between paragraphs. The County asks for no underlining, no bolding, and no bullets.

The estimated cost of the Candidate's Statement is \$250.00 for English, and \$600.00 for Spanish and English. This cost may increase or decrease. Candidates are required to pay the costs of the statement in advance. The City Clerk's Office shall bill each candidate for any cost in excess of the deposit or shall refund any unused portion of the deposit once final costs are received from the County.

The Candidate Statement must be submitted both in hard copy and digitally. Please submit a hard copy and also email your statement, or provide the digital version on flashdrive, to the City Clerk at cityclerk@atascadero.org at the time of paperwork submittal.

Filing a Candidate's Statement:

If the candidate chooses to publish a Candidate Statement, it shall be filed in the office of the City Clerk when his/her Nomination Papers are returned for filing. The statement may be withdrawn, but not changed, during the period for filing Nomination Papers until 5:00 p.m. of the next working day after the close of the nomination period. Candidate's Statements shall remain confidential until the expiration of the filing deadline.

Mass Mailing Requirements:

Candidates who anticipate sending mass mailings (200 or more identical or nearly identical pieces sent within a calendar month) must read and follow the mass mailing requirements set forth by the Political Reform Act. A copy has been provided.

Campaign Disclosure Statements

Please refer to the Campaign Disclosure Information Manual 2 that is located on the flash drive provided to you by the City Clerk. If you have any questions about appropriate form filing, please call the City Clerk's office at (805) 470-3400. For information or advice on how to file a form please contact the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) toll-free at **1-866-275-3772** or advice@fppc.ca.gov.

Statement of Economic Interests:

Pursuant to State Law, each candidate for City Council shall file a statement disclosing his or her investments and interests in real property with the City Clerk (Form 700). If, after you have read the instructions on the back of the forms, you have specific questions about what is reportable, please email the FPPC at advice@fppc.ca.gov, or call them between the hours of 9 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. at 1-866-275-3772.

Note: You do not have to disclose your personal residence if you own your home.

If elected, the candidate will be required to file within 10 days of taking office another Form 700 - Assuming Office Statement - with the City Clerk. The City Clerk will notify you when the Form 700 is due. While in office, the officeholder is required to file a Statement of Economic Interests each year. This statement is typically due in April.

Election Day

Ballot drop-off location for vote-by-mail ballots shall be open beginning October 6, 2026. On Election Day, the polls officially open at 7:00 a.m. and close at 8:00 p.m. Following the close of the official election period, ballots are delivered to the San Luis Obispo County Courthouse. They are then tallied and the results are released to the public. Given the potential increase in mail ballots being returned early, results may be available as early as 8:30 p.m.

Election returns can be viewed in the following ways:

1. The County Clerk-Recorder will be posting and updating returns on the Internet.
2. Local television stations will also provide updates.

For the most up-to-date information regarding elections, and voting, please contact the County Clerk-Recorder's Office at (805) 781-5080 or visit the website at <https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Departments/Clerk-Recorder/Elections-and-Voting>

Following the Election - Seating the new Council Members:

The County Clerk has until December 3, 2026, to certify the results of the election. It is anticipated that the new Council Members will be sworn in at the meeting of **December 8, 2026**.

The Brown Act

Candidates who have been elected but are not yet sworn in are subject to the Brown Act (Open Meeting Law). This means that they should avoid meetings or serial communications with current members of the body and/or other members-elect until they have been briefed on the law by the City Attorney, City Manager and/or City Clerk.

Ethics Training – AB 1234

California Assembly Bill 1234 became effective January 1, 2006. This Bill requires local officials to receive two (2) hours of specified ethics training every two years. If you are successful in the election, you will be required to take Ethics training within the first year of your term. This training is available online and you will be given further instructions on how to comply with this requirement.

Sexual Harassment Prevention Training and Education – AB 1661

California Assembly Bill 1661 became effective January 1, 2017. This Bill requires local officials to receive two (2) hours of specified harassment training every two years. If you are successful in the election, you will be required to take harassment training within the first six months of your term. This training is typically taken in person and you will be given further instructions on how to comply with this requirement.