

# **Candidacy Requirements**

## **For**

### **Town Council Town of Bedford**

### **May 7, 2013 Special Election**

# 2013 ELECTION CALENDAR

## Town Council of Bedford

ELECTION TYPE	ELECTION DATE	<sup>2</sup> DEADLINES (PERIODS) FOR FILING			LAST DAY TO REGISTER TO VOTE	DEADLINE TO APPLY FOR ABSENTEE BALLOT
		<sup>1</sup> CANDIDATE DECLARATIONS/ PETITIONS	<sup>1</sup> OTHER CANDIDATE FORMS	PARTY CHAIRS CERTIFY CANDIDATES		
Primary		<b>Bedford's municipal elections are historically non-partisan. Without party participation, NO primary may be called or held.</b>				
<sup>1</sup> General	May 7  § 24.2-101	March 5 7:00 p.m.  § 24.2-507	March 5 7:00 p.m.  § 24.2-503	N/A  N/A	April 15  § 24.2-416	By Mail: April 30 In Person: May 4  §§ 24.2-701B(1) & 24.2-701B(2)

<sup>1</sup>See the following pages for specifics as to forms required and where they are filed. The bulletin and forms are available on our website:  
<http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/BecomeACandidate.html>

**OR**

for a \$10.00 prepaid fee, from the State Board of Elections. Make checks payable to: State Board of Elections (include the office you are seeking).  
VOICE: In the Richmond area, telephone 804-864-8901 - From all other areas: 804-864-8901 - Toll-free: 800-552-9745 - TTY: Toll-free 800-260-3466

<sup>2</sup>For candidates for special elections to fill vacancies, the **deadline for all candidates** to file all required forms is **7:00 p.m., March 5, 2013.**

**ON ANY ELECTION DAY - WHETHER GENERAL, PRIMARY, OR SPECIAL - THE POLLS ARE REQUIRED TO OPEN AT 6:00 A.M. AND CLOSE AT 7:00 P.M.**



## General Disclaimer

The information contained in this candidacy requirements bulletin is provided with the aim of providing an overview of Virginia electoral requirements. This document, and its contents, however, is not meant as legal advice or as a binding statement of official policy. Such laws are subject to change in content and interpretation. Candidates are responsible for verifying the status of current law and compliance with same.





## INTRODUCTION

This bulletin and all required forms are available on our web site:

<http://www.sbe.virginia.gov>

Should you have questions relating to your candidacy, please do not hesitate to call our toll-free line (800)-552-9745. Within the Call Menu, press 2 for Campaign Finance and Ballot Access assistance. You also can reach us at 804-864-8901 or via email at [info@sbe.virginia.gov](mailto:info@sbe.virginia.gov).





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## I. TOWN OFFICES

**Council Members** - Seven members of council will be elected as specified in the Bedford County Circuit Court's December 18, 2012 settlement agreement.

II. ELECTION DISTRICT - The members elected will represent the entire Town of Bedford.

## III. ADVERTISING AND CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

The governing body of any town with a population of less than 25,000 may provide, by ordinance, that the provisions of the Campaign Finance Disclosure Act (CFDA) shall be applicable to elections for town offices. At the time of publication of this document, Bedford has not adopted such an ordinance.

The following *additional* information is provided for your information:

### A. Sample Ballots

Any **sample** of a paper or voting equipment **ballot** must contain the words **SAMPLE BALLOT**, the appropriate authority statement required by the Campaign Finance Disclosure Act and, in addition, must:

- (1) contain the words **SAMPLE BALLOT** in not less than 24 point type; and
- (2) be printed on paper of a color **other than white or yellow (canary)**.

### B. Posting

Contact your County Administrator to determine whether local ordinances prohibit or restrict the posting of campaign materials.

No locality shall have the authority to prohibit the display of political campaign signs on **private property** if the signs are in compliance with zoning and right of way restrictions applicable to temporary nonpolitical signs and if the signs have been posted with the permission of the owner of the property. [§15.2-109 of the *Code of Virginia*] Please note that some homeowner associations may prohibit the placement of political signs in yards.

### C. Violations

If you believe that either any local ordinance or any election law has been violated and you have facts concerning the violation, you should report them in writing to the Commonwealth's Attorney in the County of Bedford.

Violations of state-owned right of way restrictions should be reported to your regional Virginia Department of Transportation office.

#### IV. QUALIFICATIONS TO BE A CANDIDATE

A candidate must be:

- ◆ Qualified to vote for and hold the office sought;
- ◆ A resident of the Commonwealth for one year immediately preceding the election;
- ◆ A resident, by the time of filing, of the Town of Bedford.

#### V. DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO BE FILED

A candidate must file certain documents in order to qualify to appear on the ballot. Each form is described below. An explanation of who is required to file each item also is provided. Each document can be downloaded from our website:

<http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/BecomeACandidate.html>

##### A. Certificate of Candidate Qualification

This document is prepared and distributed by the State Board of Elections. **All** candidates are required to file this form. In accordance with SBE Policy [2010-003](#), the certificate of candidate qualification may not be filed with the general registrar until after January 1, 2013.

##### B. Declaration of Candidacy

This document is prepared and distributed by the State Board of Elections. It must be filed by independent (non-party) candidates. The Declaration must be filed **at the same time** as the petitions. See Item V, C2 on the next page for the number of signatures required on petitions.

##### C. Petition of Qualified Voters

This document is prepared and distributed by the State Board of Elections. Petitions containing at least the number of signatures required for the office sought must be filed **together with** the *Declaration of Candidacy*. Petitions must be filed by all Independent (non-party) candidates and **cannot** be circulated until **after** January 1, 2013.

##### 1. Petition Circulator

A candidate's petition may be circulated by any person who is legal resident of the United States of America. Circulators may not be minors or felons whose voting rights have not been restored.

**Special Note:** The U.S. District Court's ruling in *Libertarian Party of Virginia v. Judd et al.* enjoins the State Board of Elections from enforcing §§ 24.2-506 and 24.2-521. This ruling is under appeal to the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals. The outcome of the appeal might strike or uphold the out of state petition circulator permission. The appeal is scheduled to be heard in the Spring of 2013.

## V. DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO BE FILED (continued)

### C. Petition of Qualified Voters (continued)

#### 1. Petition Circulator (continued)

The person circulating the petition must affirm before a notary or other person authorized to administer oaths, that he **personally witnessed** the affixing of each signature. Falsely taking this affidavit is a felony under Virginia law. The circulator **NEVER** can leave the petition unattended, e.g., left on the counter at a grocery store, restaurant, etc.

#### 2. Number of Signatures Required

Petitions must contain the signatures of at least **125** qualified voters of the Town of Bedford. See **EXCEPTIONS** below.

The State Board recommends that a candidate get at least 1½ times the number of signatures required to assure that enough signers are qualified voters. (For example: SBE recommends candidates for town council with a 125 signature requirement gather at least 200 signatures.)

#### 3. Regulation on Material Omissions on Candidate Petitions

The State Board of Elections' Material Omission Regulation identifies what does and does not constitute a material omission on a candidate's petition for the purpose of disallowing the petition.

**Special Note:** The U.S. District Court's ruling permitting out of state petition circulators makes B 6(i) of the regulation unenforceable.

##### **1VAC20-50-20. Material omissions from candidate petitions.**

- A. Pursuant to the requirements of § 24.2-506, 24.2-521, and 24.2-543 of the Code of Virginia, a petition should not be rendered invalid if it contains an error or omission not material to its proper processing.
- B. The following omissions are always material and any petition containing such omissions should be rendered invalid if:
  1. The petition submitted is not the double-sided, or a copy thereof, provided by the State Board of Elections;
  2. The petition does not have the name, or some variation of the name, and address of the candidate on the front of the form;
  3. The petition fails to identify the office sought on the front of the form;
  4. The petition fails to identify the applicable election district in which the candidate is running for office;
  5. The circulator has not signed the petition affidavit and provided his current address;
  6. The circulator is (i) not a legal resident of the Commonwealth; (ii) a minor, or (iii) a felon whose voting rights have not been restored;

## V. DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO BE FILED (continued)

### C. **Petition of Qualified Voters** (continued)

#### 3. **Regulation on Material Omissions on Candidate Petitions** (continued)

7. The circulator has not signed the petition he circulated in the presence of a notary;
8. The circulator has not had a notary sign the affidavit for each petition submitted;
9. The notary has not affixed a photographically reproducible seal;
10. The notary has not included his registration number and commission expiration date; or
11. Any combination of the scenarios of this subsection exists.

C. If the circulator signs the petition in the "Signature of Registered Voter," his signature shall be invalidated but the petition shall be valid notwithstanding any other error or omission.

D. The following omissions shall be treated as nonmaterial provided that the omitted information can be independently verified:

1. An older version of the petition is used (provided that the information presented complies with current laws, regulations, and guidelines);
2. The "election information" including (i) county, city, or town in which the election will be held; (ii) election type; and (iii) date of election are omitted;
3. The name of the candidate and office sought are omitted from the back of the petition; or
4. The circulator has not provided the last four digits of his social security number in the affidavit.

#### 4. **Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Petitions**

The following are frequently asked questions received regarding the petition process:

1. Do I have to print the petition double-sided or may I staple two separate pages together and circulate?

Answer: A petition page is a double-sided document with both a front and back. You need to print out the petition double-sided. The front and back of the petition cannot be stapled together and circulated as one petition page.

2. What happens if I need additional time to gather the required number of signatures?

Answer: Neither the general registrars nor SBE have authority to accept additional petitions after the applicable candidate filing deadline.

## V. DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO BE FILED (continued)

### C. Petition of Qualified Voters (continued)

#### 4. Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Petitions (continued)

3. Who is responsible for ensuring my petition signers and circulators are eligible to sign and/or circulate my petition?

Answer: **The candidate.** As a courtesy, general registrars have the option of verifying the number of qualified voters that have signed a candidate's petitions prior to the filing deadline for the purpose of alerting the candidate of deficiencies. However, it is the candidate's ultimate responsibility to ensure that he or she gathers the requisite number of signatures of qualified voters, utilize eligible circulators, and otherwise follow the procedures laid out in the law. A candidate that files the Certificate of Candidate Qualification with his/her general registrar may purchase from the State Board of Elections a list of registered voters for their election district. Purchasing the list may aide in petition signature proficiency.

4. Is it required for the petitions to be notarized?

Answer: Yes. Sections 24.2-506 and 24.2-521 require that each petition circulator's affidavit be notarized. Circulators should verify that the notary provides their photographically reproducible notary seal\stamp, notary registration number, date notary commission expires and notary signature to each petition page.

5. Must I provide my driver's license number and state of issuance when completing the petition affidavit?

Answer: **No.** The information is not required and does not invalidate the petition if left blank.

6. I see two versions of the Petition of Qualified Voters form available on SBE's website, which one should I use?

Answer: Either the letter size (8 ½" x 11") or legal size (8 ½" x 14") petition may be used. The legal size version contains more signature lines than the letter size version. The letter size version fits more neatly on a clip board. Personal preference will prevail.

V. DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO BE FILED (continued)

**D. Statement of Economic Interests**

This document is prepared by the Secretary of the Commonwealth and should be available from the town clerk. If questions arise about how to complete the Statement, please contact the Secretary of the Commonwealth's Conflict of Interest Director, at (804) 786-2441. It is required to be filed by all candidates for Bedford Town Council. In accordance with SBE Policy [2010-003](#), the statement of economic interests may not be filed with the general registrar until after January 1, 2013.

**Exception** - Individuals who are officers or employees need not re-file this form as candidates if they met the requirement for filing in January 2013.

VI. FILING DEADLINE AND WHERE TO FILE

REV 1/7/13

**For A Convention/Mass Meeting Candidate**

Postmarks are acceptable **only** if these documents are mailed by registered or certified mail and a receipt showing date of mailing can be produced if demanded by the office with which the forms are filed.

REQUIRED FORMS	WHERE TO FILE	FILING DEADLINE
*1. Certificate of Candidate Qualification	General Registrar of Bedford City	7:00 p.m. 3/5/2013
*2. Statement of Economic Interests		

**Any person who fails to file all the required forms by the above deadline MAY NOT have his name printed on the General Election ballot.**

\* Refer to Pages 2 through 6 herein for details.

## VII. FILING DEADLINE AND WHERE TO FILE

REV 1/7/13

**For An Independent (Non-Party) Candidate**

*Items 1 and 2* listed below **must be received** by the *General Registrar* by the filing deadline. Postmarks are acceptable **only** for *Items 3 and 4* and **only** if they are mailed by registered or certified mail and a receipt showing date of mailing can be produced if demanded by the office with which the forms are filed.

<b>REQUIRED FORMS</b>	<b>WHERE TO FILE</b>	<b>FILING DEADLINE</b>
*1. Declaration of Candidacy	General Registrar of Bedford City	7:00 p.m. 3/5/2013
*2. Petitions of Qualified Voters		
*3. Statement of Economic Interests		
*4. Certificate of Candidate Qualification		

**Any person who fails to file all the required forms by the above deadline  
MAY NOT have his name printed on the General Election ballot.**

\* Refer to Pages 2 through 6 herein for details.

## VIII. NOTICE OF DEFICIENCIES IN DECLARATION OR PETITIONS

An independent [non-party] candidate may request notification of any problems with his filing that can be corrected before the filing deadline. This request **must be in writing** as required by §24.2-505 of the *Code of Virginia*.

This letter must be addressed to the secretary of the electoral board of Bedford County. It must accompany the Declaration of Candidacy and, if required, the petitions filed with the general registrar.

The written request **does not guarantee** timely response. Certain factors, may affect the electoral board's ability to comply with the request, that is, the number of filings, etc. It is suggested that documents be filed **at least ten [10] working days before the filing deadline** if this notice is requested.

## IX. ORDER OF NAMES ON BALLOTS

In a non-partisan **General Election**, the independent candidates appear in alphabetical order by last name.

## X. THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE

Any successful candidate in a town with a population **in excess of 3,500** must file, as a condition to assuming office, with the **Town Clerk**, a **second** Statement of Economic Interests as required by §§ 2.2-3115 and 2.2-3116 of the *Code of Virginia* **prior to taking office**, and annually thereafter by January 15 of each year. Forms are prescribed by the Secretary of the Commonwealth and should be available from the Town Clerk. If the Clerk is unable to provide a copy, the form can be obtained from our website in our candidate forms section.

<http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/CandidateForms.html>

The successful candidate in a *general election* is required by law to qualify and take the oath of office no later than the day of the initial meeting of the new town council; in a *special election*, within thirty days of the election. Failure to qualify in a timely manner creates a vacancy in the office.

## XI. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Listed below are the most commonly asked questions. If you need further details, please call us on our toll-free number.

### A. Who may circulate a candidate's petitions?

A candidate's petition may be circulated by any person who is a legal resident of the United States of America. Circulators may not be minors or felons whose voting rights have not been restored.

**Special Note:** The U.S. District Court's ruling in *Libertarian Party of Virginia v. Judd et al.* enjoins the State Board of Elections from enforcing §§ 24.2-506 and 24.2-521. This ruling is under appeal to the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals. The outcome of the appeal might strike or uphold the out of state petition circulator permission. The appeal is scheduled to be heard in the Spring of 2013.

The circulator must affirm before a notary or other person authorized to administer oaths, that he **personally witnessed** the affixing of each signature. Falsely taking this affidavit is a felony under Virginia law. The circulator can **NEVER** leave the petition unattended, e. g., left on the counter at a grocery store, restaurant, etc.

### B. I am circulating a petition for a candidate. May I also sign as a qualified voter the petition that I am circulating?

I am a Notary circulating petitions for a candidate. May I notarize the petition pages I circulate?

**NO TO BOTH.** The person circulating the petition must swear, under oath, that he **personally witnessed** the affixing of each signature on the petition and no person can witness his own signature.

### C. I am a candidate and a Notary. May I notarize the petition pages circulated by other persons?

**NO.** § 47.1-30 of the *Code of Virginia* prohibits a notary from performing a notarial act on any document in which the notary or his spouse is a party, **or** in which either of them has a direct beneficial interest.

Any Notary who violates these provisions is considered guilty of official misconduct, may be removed from office and may be subject to other penalties.

## XI. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (continued)

### D. I work for the federal government. Can I be a candidate?

Pursuant to the federal law commonly known as the Hatch Act, you may be a candidate in a **non-partisan election** or, if you live in the Counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, Prince William, Spotsylvania or Stafford or the Cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas, Manassas Park or Portsmouth, you may be an **independent candidate for local office in a partisan election**. An election is considered partisan if any of the candidates for the office you would seek are nominated by a political party.

To determine whether you might also be affected by the rules and regulations of the agency for which you work, **contact your personnel officer**.

It should also be noted that most employees of the legislative branch of the federal government are not covered by the Hatch Act but may be affected by other rules and regulations.

### E. I work for the state or a local government. Can I be a candidate?

**Some** state and local government employees **are prohibited** from being candidates. You may be so prohibited if your Agency receives federal funds. **Contact the personnel officer where you work**. If necessary, present the facts of your case in writing, including the office you wish to seek, to the Hatch Act Unit, **U.S. Office of the Special Counsel**, 1730 M Street NW, Suite 218, Washington, D. C. 20036-4505 or call them at 800-854-2824 or 202-254-3650. That office will determine if you are affected by the Hatch Act. Their web address is <http://www.osc.gov>

Most state and local government employees are not prohibited by law from being a candidate. However, you may be affected by the rules and regulations of the agency or ordinances of the government for which you work. **Contact your personnel officer**.

### F. I do business with my local government. Am I prohibited from holding office on its governing body due to a conflict of interest?

**Contact an attorney** to determine whether or not the provisions of the State and Local Government Conflict of Interests Act [§§ 2.2-3100 through 2.2-3127 of the *Code of Virginia*] might affect your ability to hold the office you intend to seek.

### G. What activities are permitted at the polls on election day?

Please refer to the Do's and Don'ts with Guidelines for Campaigners and Authorized Representatives published by the State Board of Elections. We suggest that you provide this information to any person who will either serve as your representative inside the polls or work for you outside the polls on election day.

<http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/Files/Cast%20Your%20Ballot/VotingInPerson/Dos%20and%200Don't%20For%20Campaigners%20and%20Authorized%20Representatives.pdf>