



NORTH CAROLINA

State Board of Elections

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FACT SHEET: Running for judicial office, 2016 Election

1) How are judges elected in North Carolina? [G.S. § 163-322](#), [163-323\(h\)](#)

All judicial offices that are elected in North Carolina are elected on a non-partisan basis (names of candidates for Court of Appeals are accompanied by the party affiliation on the ballot). A non-partisan primary is held to narrow the field to two candidates whose names will appear as choices on the General Election ballot.

2) How does a person's name get on the ballot for the primary election?

[G.S. §§ 163-106](#), [163-107](#), [163-108](#), [163-322](#)

- Candidates must file a notice of candidacy with the State Board of Elections office and pay a filing fee of 1% of the annual salary of the office sought.
- Notice of candidacy forms may be obtained from the State Board of Elections office or website prior to the date on which candidates may commence filing.
- At the time of filing, all candidates must file a certificate signed by the Director or Chairperson of the County Board of Elections where they are registered to vote at their current residential address in that county. The certification states the party with which the person is affiliated.
- The notice of candidacy includes questions about any previous felony convictions of the candidate, and will require a further report on those convictions if there are any. Active felons who have not had their citizenship rights restored (full completion of any felony sentence, including probation, restitution, etc.) are not eligible to be registered to vote or to run for elected office.
- A candidate may not file for more than one office in the same election.
- Candidates who have properly filed their notice of candidacy and paid the filing fee will have their names certified by the chairman of the State Board of Elections to the Secretary of State three days after the expiration of the filing period.
- If only one or two candidates files to run for a judicial office, those names will be forwarded on as the choices for the General Election ballot, without the need for a primary.

3) **When is the filing period?** [S.L. 2015-258 § 2\(b\)](#), [G.S. §163-106\(c\)](#)

- Begins: Noon on **Tuesday, December 1, 2015**
- Ends: Noon on **Monday, December 21, 2015**

4) **When are the elections?** [S.L. 2015-258 § 1\(b\)](#), [G.S. § 163-1](#)

- **Primary: Tuesday, March 15, 2016**
- **General election:** The Tuesday after the first Monday in November, **Tuesday, November 8, 2016**

5) **What are the qualifications to be elected?** [N.C. Const. Art. VI § 6](#), [Art. IV § 22](#), [G.S. § 162-2](#)

- A registered voter of the district (or in the case of Supreme Court or Court of Appeals, which are elected statewide, a registered voter of the State)
- At least 21 years of age
- Licensed to practice law in North Carolina

6) **How long is the term for these offices?** [N.C. Const. Art. IV § 16](#), [G.S. §§ 7A-140](#), [7A-4.20](#)

- Supreme Court Justice: 8 years
- Court of Appeals Judge: 8 years
- Superior Court Judge: 8 years
- District Court Judge: 4 years

There is an age limit of 72 years of age for elected judicial offices, at which point the official is required to retire from the elected office.

7) **What are the campaign reporting requirements?** [G.S. § 163-278.9](#)

The Campaign Reporting Act requires financial disclosure of all political activities. Reports are filed with the State Board of Elections campaign reporting office. The time of filing of these reports, and the types of reports will vary by the type of campaign. Every candidate will be responsible for their compliance with campaign reporting laws. A Candidate Campaign Finance Manual is available online on the [State Board of Elections' website](#).

The law requires that the treasurer of every campaign committee receives training in handling campaign finance reports and law. This can be accomplished online or in-person at numerous training sessions offered by the State Board of Elections.

IMPORTANT: An organizational report must be filed with the State Board of Elections within ten days of becoming a candidate. For these purposes, “becoming a candidate” includes taking positive action for the purpose of obtaining nomination or being elected, soliciting or receiving contributions, making expenditures to enhance a campaign, or filing a notice of candidacy, whichever comes first. The report can be

found online on the [State Board of Elections' website](#). Your local County Board of Elections is also available to help.

8) Are there other filings required? [S.L. 2015-258 § 2\(f\)](#), [G.S. § 138A-22](#)

The State Government Ethics Act requires that candidates for an office covered by the Act must file a Statement of Economic Interest by **Monday, February 1, 2016** to the State Ethics Commission. For more information:
<http://www.ethicscommission.nc.gov/sei/default.aspx>

9) Is public financing available for judicial elections?

Current law does not provide public financing for judicial elections.