

REFERENCE TITLE: superior court judges; petitions; addresses

State of Arizona
House of Representatives
Fifty-seventh Legislature
Second Regular Session
2026

HB 4035

Introduced by
Representative Bliss

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTIONS 16-311, 16-314, 16-333 AND 16-344, ARIZONA REVISED
STATUTES; RELATING TO NOMINATING PROCEDURES.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

2 Section 1. Section 16-311, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
3 read:

4 16-311. Nomination papers; statement of interest; filing;
5 definitions

6 A. Any person desiring to become a candidate at a primary election
7 for a political party and to have the person's name printed on the
8 official ballot shall be a qualified elector of the party and, not less
9 than one hundred twenty nor more than one hundred fifty days before the
10 primary election, shall sign and cause to be filed a nomination paper
11 giving the person's actual residence address or, if the person does not
12 have an actual residence address, a description of place of residence and
13 post office address, or, if the person's actual residence address is
14 protected pursuant to section 16-153, a post office box or private mailbox
15 address in the candidate's district or precinct, as applicable for a
16 district or precinct office, naming the party of which the person desires
17 to become a candidate, stating the office and district or precinct, if
18 any, for which the person offers the person's candidacy, stating the exact
19 manner in which the person desires to have the person's name printed on
20 the official ballot pursuant to subsection ~~A~~ H of this section, and
21 giving the date of the primary election and, if nominated, the date of the
22 general election at which the person desires to become a candidate.
23 Except for a candidate for United States senator or representative in
24 Congress, a candidate for public office shall be a qualified elector at
25 the time of filing and shall reside in the county, district or precinct
26 that the person proposes to represent. A candidate for partisan public
27 office shall be continuously registered with the political party of which
28 the person desires to be a candidate beginning ~~no~~ NOT later than the date
29 of the first petition signature on the candidate's petition through the
30 date of the general election at which the person is a candidate.

31 B. Any person desiring to become a candidate at any nonpartisan
32 election and to have the person's name printed on the official ballot
33 shall be at the time of filing a qualified elector of the county, city,
34 town or district and, not less than one hundred twenty nor more than one
35 hundred fifty days before the election, shall sign and cause to be filed a
36 nomination paper giving the person's actual residence address or, if the
37 person does not have an actual residence address, a description of place
38 of residence and post office address, or, if the person's actual residence
39 address is protected pursuant to section 16-153, a post office box or
40 private mailbox address in the candidate's county, city, town or district
41 and ward or precinct, as applicable for a county, city, town or district
42 and ward or precinct office, stating the office and county, city, town or
43 district and ward or precinct, if any, for which the person offers the
44 person's candidacy, stating the exact manner in which the person desires
45 to have the person's name printed on the official ballot pursuant to

1 subsection ~~G~~ H of this section and giving the date of the election. A
2 candidate for office shall reside at the time of filing in the county,
3 city, town, district, ward or precinct that the person proposes to
4 represent.

5 C. Notwithstanding subsection B of this section, any city or town
6 may adopt by ordinance for its elections the time frame provided in
7 subsection A of this section for filing nomination petitions. The
8 ordinance shall be adopted not less than one hundred fifty days before the
9 first election to which it applies.

10 D. All persons desiring to become a candidate shall file with the
11 nomination paper provided for in subsection A of this section a
12 declaration, which shall be printed in a form prescribed by the secretary
13 of state. The declaration shall include facts sufficient to show that,
14 other than the residency requirement provided in subsection A of this
15 section and the satisfaction of any monetary penalties, fines or judgments
16 as prescribed in subsection ~~J~~ K of this section, the candidate will be
17 qualified at the time of election to hold the office the person seeks, and
18 that for any monetary penalties, fines or judgments as prescribed in
19 subsection ~~J~~ K of this section, the candidate has made complete payment
20 before the time of filing.

21 E. The nomination paper of a candidate for the office of United
22 States senator or representative in Congress, for the office of
23 presidential elector or for a state office, including a member of the
24 legislature, or for any other office for which the electors of the entire
25 state or a subdivision of the state greater than a county are entitled to
26 vote, shall be filed with the secretary of state ~~no~~ NOT later than 5:00
27 p.m. on the last date for filing.

28 F. The nomination paper of a candidate for superior court judge or
29 for a county, district and precinct office for which the electors of a
30 county or a subdivision of a county other than an incorporated city or
31 town are entitled to vote shall be filed with the county elections officer
32 ~~no~~ NOT later than 5:00 p.m. on the last date for filing as prescribed by
33 subsection A of this section. The nomination paper of a candidate for a
34 city or town office shall be filed with the city or town clerk ~~no~~ NOT
35 later than 5:00 p.m. on the last date for filing. The nomination paper of
36 a candidate for school district office shall be filed with the county
37 school superintendent ~~no~~ NOT later than 5:00 p.m. on the last date for
38 filing.

39 G. ON THE FILING OF THE DECLARATION PRESCRIBED BY SUBSECTION D OF
40 THIS SECTION AND THE STATEMENT OF INTEREST PRESCRIBED BY SUBSECTION I OF
41 THIS SECTION BY A CANDIDATE FOR SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE WHO IS AN INCUMBENT
42 AND WHO HAS PROVIDED A RESIDENCE ADDRESS WITHIN THE COUNTY, THE FOLLOWING
43 APPLY:

1 1. THE FILING OFFICER SHALL SEAL THE STATEMENT OF INTEREST FROM
2 PUBLIC DISCLOSURE AND THE INCUMBENT CANDIDATE IS PRESUMED TO BE A RESIDENT
3 OF THE COUNTY.

4 2. IN ANY CHALLENGE TO THE QUALIFICATIONS OF THE INCUMBENT PURSUANT
5 TO SECTION 16-351, THE CHALLENGER SHALL DEMONSTRATE GOOD CAUSE TO BELIEVE
6 THAT THE INCUMBENT IS NOT A RESIDENT OF THE COUNTY BEFORE THE FILING
7 OFFICER MAY DISCLOSE THE STATEMENT OF INTEREST.

8 ~~G.~~ H. The nomination paper shall include the exact manner in which
9 the candidate desires to have the person's name printed on the official
10 ballot and shall be limited to the candidate's surname and given name or
11 names, an abbreviated version of such names or appropriate initials such
12 as "Bob" for "Robert", "Jim" for "James", "Wm." for "William" or "S." for
13 "Samuel". Nicknames are permissible, but nicknames, abbreviated versions
14 or initials of given names may not suggest reference to professional,
15 fraternal, religious or military titles and may not include a slogan, a
16 promotional word or phrase or any word that does not actually constitute a
17 nickname. No other descriptive name or names shall be printed on the
18 official ballot, except as provided in this section. Candidates'
19 abbreviated names or nicknames may be printed within quotation marks. The
20 candidate's surname shall be printed first, followed by the given name or
21 names.

22 ~~H.~~ I. Not later than the date of the first petition signature on a
23 nomination petition, a person who may be a candidate for office pursuant
24 to this section shall file a statement of interest with the appropriate
25 filing officer for that office. The statement of interest shall contain
26 the name of the person, the political party, if any, and the name of the
27 office that may be sought. Any nomination petition signatures collected
28 before the date the statement of interest is filed are invalid and subject
29 to challenge. This subsection does not apply to:

30 1. Candidates for elected office for special taxing districts that
31 are established pursuant to title 48.

32 2. Candidates for precinct committeeman.

33 3. Candidates for president or vice president of the United States.

34 ~~I.~~ J. A person who does not file a timely nomination paper that
35 complies with this section is not eligible to have the person's name
36 printed on the official ballot for that office. The filing officer shall
37 not accept the nomination paper of a candidate for state or local office
38 unless the person provides or has provided all of the following:

39 1. The financial disclosure statement as prescribed for candidates
40 for that office.

41 2. The declaration of qualification and eligibility as prescribed
42 in subsection D of this section.

43 ~~J.~~ K. Except in cases where the liability is being appealed, the
44 filing officer shall not accept the nomination paper of a candidate for
45 state or local office if the person is liable for an aggregation of \$1,000

or more in fines, penalties, late fees or administrative or civil judgments, including any interest or costs, in any combination, that have not been fully satisfied at the time of the attempted filing of the nomination paper and the liability arose from failure to comply with or enforcement of chapter 6 of this title.

L. FOR THE PURPOSES OF SUBSECTION G OF THIS SECTION, "INCUMBENT" MEANS A JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT WHO HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN ELECTED TO THAT OFFICE AS PRESCRIBED BY THIS CHAPTER, WHO HAS HELD THAT OFFICE CONTINUOUSLY SINCE ELECTION AND WHO IS SEEKING REELECTION TO THAT SAME OFFICE.

~~K.~~ M. For the purposes of this title:

1. "Election district" means this state, any county, city, town, precinct or other political subdivision or a special district that is not a political subdivision, that is authorized by statute to conduct an election and that is authorized or required to conduct its election in accordance with this title.

2. "Nomination paper" means the form filed with the appropriate office by a person wishing to declare the person's intent to become a candidate for a particular political office.

Sec. 2. Section 16-314, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to read:

16-314. Filing and form of nomination petitions; definition

A. Any person ~~desiring~~ WHO DESIRES to become a candidate at any election and to have the person's name printed on the official ballot shall file, not less than one hundred twenty nor more than one hundred fifty days before the primary election and with the same officer as provided by section 16-311, a nomination petition in addition to the nomination paper required.

~~C.~~ B. Nomination petitions shall be captioned "partisan nomination petition" or "nonpartisan nomination petition", followed by the language of the petition in substantially the following form, except that if the candidate does not have an actual residence address, the candidate may use a description of place of residence and post office address, or, if the candidate's actual residence address is protected pursuant to section 16-153, a post office box or private mailbox address in the candidate's political division or district from which the nomination is sought is sufficient:

Partisan Nomination Petition

I, the undersigned, a qualified elector of the county of _____, state of Arizona, and of (here name political division or district from which the nomination is sought) and a member of the _____ party or a person who is registered as no party preference or independent as the party preference or who is registered with a political party that is not qualified for representation on the ballot, hereby

1 nominate _____ who resides at _____ in the
 2 county of _____ for the party nomination for the office
 3 of _____ to be voted at the primary election to be
 4 held _____ as representing the principles of such
 5 party, and I hereby declare that I am qualified to vote for
 6 this office and that I have not signed, and will not sign, any
 7 nomination petition for more persons than the number of
 8 candidates necessary to fill such office at the next ensuing
 9 election. I further declare that if I choose to use a post
 10 office box address on this petition, my residence address has
 11 not changed since I last reported it to the county recorder
 12 for purposes of updating my voter registration file.

13 Nonpartisan Nomination Petition

14 I, the undersigned, a qualified elector of the county of
 15 _____, state of Arizona, and of (here name political
 16 division or district from which the nomination is sought)
 17 hereby nominate _____ who resides at _____
 18 in the county of _____ for the office of
 19 _____ to be voted at the _____ election to
 20 be held _____, and hereby declare that I am
 21 qualified to vote for this office and that I have not signed
 22 and will not sign any nomination petitions for more persons
 23 than the number of candidates necessary to fill such office at
 24 the next ensuing election. I further declare that if I choose
 25 to use a post office box address on this petition, my
 26 residence address has not changed since I last reported it to
 27 the county recorder for purposes of updating my voter
 28 registration file.

29 ~~B.~~ C. The nomination petition of a person seeking to fill an
 30 unexpired vacant term for any public office shall designate the expiration
 31 date of the term following the name of the office being sought.

32 D. A CANDIDATE FOR SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE WHO IS AN INCUMBENT MAY USE
 33 THE CANDIDATE'S DUTY POST ADDRESS IN PLACE OF THE CANDIDATE'S RESIDENCE
 34 ADDRESS ON THE NOMINATION PETITION AND SHALL INFORM EACH QUALIFIED ELECTOR
 35 WHO SIGNS THE PETITION THAT THE CANDIDATE HAS LISTED A DUTY POST ADDRESS
 36 IN PLACE OF THE CANDIDATE'S RESIDENCE ADDRESS. FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS
 37 SUBSECTION, "INCUMBENT" MEANS A JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT WHO HAS
 38 PREVIOUSLY BEEN ELECTED TO THAT OFFICE AS PRESCRIBED BY THIS CHAPTER, WHO
 39 HAS HELD THAT OFFICE CONTINUOUSLY SINCE ELECTION AND WHO IS SEEKING
 40 REELECTION TO THAT SAME OFFICE.

41 ~~B.~~ E. For the purposes of this title, "nomination petition" means
 42 the form or forms used for obtaining the required number of signatures of
 43 qualified electors, which is circulated by or on behalf of the person
 44 wishing to become a candidate for a political office.

1 Sec. 3. Section 16-333, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
2 read:

3 16-333. Preparation and filing of nominating petition for
4 certain judicial offices; exception; definition

5 A. Any nominating petition for a candidate for judge of the
6 superior court, judge of the court of appeals or justice of the supreme
7 court to be voted on at any election shall be prepared and filed in
8 accordance with ~~the provisions of~~ this chapter. Any petition filed by a
9 candidate for any such court ~~which~~ THAT does not comply with ~~the~~
10 ~~provisions of~~ this chapter shall have no force or effect at any such
11 election.

12 B. THIS SECTION AND SECTION 16-314 DO NOT APPLY TO A CANDIDATE FOR
13 JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT IF THE CANDIDATE FOR JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR
14 COURT MEETS ALL OF THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

15 1. THE CANDIDATE IS THE INCUMBENT.

16 2. THE CANDIDATE HAS COMPLIED WITH SUBSECTION A OF THIS SECTION IN
17 A PREVIOUS ELECTION.

18 3. THE CANDIDATE HAS BEEN PREVIOUSLY ELECTED TO THAT OFFICE UNDER
19 THE PROVISIONS OF THIS CHAPTER.

20 4. NO OTHER CANDIDATE FOR JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT HAS FILED A
21 STATEMENT OF INTEREST PURSUANT TO SECTION 16-311 AT LEAST ONE HUNDRED AND
22 FIFTY DAYS PRIOR TO THE FIRST DATE AT WHICH THE NOMINATING PETITIONS MAY
23 BE FILED UNDER SECTION 16-314.

24 C. FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION, "INCUMBENT" MEANS A JUDGE OF
25 THE SUPERIOR COURT WHO HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN ELECTED TO THAT OFFICE AS
26 PRESCRIBED BY THIS CHAPTER, HAS HELD THAT OFFICE CONTINUOUSLY SINCE
27 ELECTION AND IS SEEKING REELECTION TO THAT SAME OFFICE.

28 Sec. 4. Section 16-344, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
29 read:

30 16-344. Office of presidential elector; appointment by state
31 committee chairman

32 A. The chairman of the state committee of a political party that is
33 qualified for representation on an official party ballot at the primary
34 election and accorded a column on the general election ballot shall
35 appoint candidates for the office of presidential elector equal to the
36 number of United States senators and representatives in Congress from this
37 state and shall file for each candidate with the secretary of state, not
38 more than ten days after the primary election, by 5:00 p.m. on the last
39 day for filing:

40 1. A nomination paper giving the candidate's actual residence
41 address or, if the person does not have an actual residence address, a
42 description of place of residence and post office address, or, if the
43 person's actual residence address is protected pursuant to section 16-153,
44 a post office box or private mailbox address, naming the party of which
45 the candidate desires to become a candidate, stating his candidacy for the

1 office of presidential elector, stating the exact manner in which the
2 candidate desires to have his name printed on the official ballot pursuant
3 to section 16-311, subsection ~~G~~ H, and stating the date of the general
4 election at which he desires to become a candidate.

5 2. An affidavit including facts sufficient to show that the
6 candidate resides in this state and will be qualified at the time of the
7 election to hold the office of presidential elector.

8 B. The nomination paper and affidavit of qualification pursuant to
9 subsection A of this section shall be printed in a form prescribed by the
10 secretary of state.