

Senate Engrossed

elections; canvass; certification; acknowledgment

State of Arizona  
Senate  
Fifty-seventh Legislature  
Second Regular Session  
2026

# SENATE BILL 1003

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTIONS 16-642, 16-645 AND 16-646, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES;  
RELATING TO CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

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

2 Section 1. Section 16-642, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to  
3 read:

4 16-642. Canvass of election; postponements

5 A. The governing body holding an election shall meet and  
6 ACKNOWLEDGE WITHOUT PREJUDICE THE canvass OF the election as follows:

7 1. THE COUNTY OFFICER WHO CONDUCTED THE ELECTION SHALL CERTIFY ITS  
8 ACCURACY UNDER OATH AND THE COUNTY OFFICER WHO TABULATED THE BALLOTS SHALL  
9 CERTIFY THE RESULTS OF THE TABULATION UNDER OATH TO the governing board of  
10 a county, WHICH shall meet and ACKNOWLEDGE WITHOUT PREJUDICE THE canvass  
11 OF THE ELECTION as follows:

12 (a) For the primary election, not later than the second Monday  
13 after the election.

14 (b) For the general election, not later than the third Thursday  
15 after the election.

16 2. The secretary of state shall ACKNOWLEDGE WITHOUT PREJUDICE THE  
17 canvass OF THE ELECTION as follows:

18 (a) For the primary election, not later than the third Thursday  
19 after the election.

20 (b) For the general election, not later than the third Monday after  
21 the election.

22 3. THE OFFICER WHO CONDUCTED THE ELECTION SHALL CERTIFY ITS  
23 ACCURACY UNDER OATH AND THE OFFICER WHO TABULATED THE BALLOTS SHALL  
24 CERTIFY THE RESULTS OF THE TABULATION UNDER OATH TO the governing body of  
25 a city, town or special district, WHICH shall meet and ACKNOWLEDGE WITHOUT  
26 PREJUDICE THE canvass OF the election not less than six days and not more  
27 than twenty days following the election.

28 B. THE OFFICER WHO CONDUCTED THE ELECTION SHALL CERTIFY ITS  
29 ACCURACY UNDER OATH AND THE OFFICER WHO TABULATED THE BALLOTS SHALL  
30 CERTIFY THE RESULTS OF THE TABULATION UNDER OATH TO the governing body of  
31 a special district as defined in title 48, WHICH shall present to the  
32 board of supervisors a certified copy AND AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT WITHOUT  
33 PREJUDICE of the official canvass of the election at the next regularly  
34 scheduled meeting of the board of supervisors. For purposes of contesting  
35 a special district election as described in section 16-673, the canvass is  
36 not complete until the presentation to the board of supervisors is made.

37 C. If, at the time of the meeting of the governing body, the  
38 returns from any polling place in the election district where the polls  
39 were opened and an election held are found to be missing, the  
40 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT WITHOUT PREJUDICE OF THE canvass OF THE ELECTION shall be  
41 postponed from day to day until all the returns are received FROM THE  
42 OFFICER WHO CONDUCTED THE ELECTION AND CERTIFIES ITS ACCURACY UNDER OATH  
43 AND THE OFFICER WHO TABULATED THE BALLOTS AND CERTIFIES THE RESULTS OF THE  
44 TABULATION UNDER OATH, or until six postponements have been had. ~~The~~ THIS  
45 subsection does not apply to the county board of supervisors'

1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT WITHOUT PREJUDICE OF THE canvass of the primary and  
2 general election.

3 Sec. 2. Section 16-645, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to  
4 read:

5 16-645. Canvass and return of precinct vote; declaring  
6 nominee of party; certificate of nomination;  
7 write-in candidates

8 A. When the board of supervisors, or the governing body of a city  
9 or town, HAS RECEIVED THE SWORN STATEMENTS OF THE OFFICER WHO CONDUCTED  
10 THE ELECTION AND THE OFFICER WHO TABULATED THE BALLOTS AS PRESCRIBED BY  
11 SECTION 16-642 AND has completed its canvass of precinct returns, the  
12 person having the largest number of votes, or if more than one candidate  
13 is necessary, those candidates to the required number who have received  
14 the largest number of votes for the nomination for an office in the  
15 political party of which the person was set forth on the ballot as a  
16 candidate for the nomination, shall be declared the nominee of the party  
17 for that office and shall be given a certificate of nomination for that  
18 office by the board or governing body, which shall entitle the person to  
19 have the person's name placed on the official ballot at the ensuing  
20 election as the nominee of the party for the office. When canvassing  
21 write-in votes the apparent intent of the voter shall be taken into  
22 consideration to the extent possible and the standard prescribed for  
23 federal write-in candidates in section 16-543.02, subsection C applies.

24 B. The board of supervisors shall deliver the official canvass by  
25 electronic means to the secretary of state within thirteen calendar days  
26 after the primary election, and the secretary of state shall on or before  
27 the third Thursday following the primary election canvass the return and  
28 issue a letter declaring nomination as provided in this section to the  
29 nominees who filed nominating petitions and papers with the secretary of  
30 state pursuant to section 16-311, subsection D. For any partisan primary  
31 election, the governing body or officer in charge of elections shall  
32 prepare and transmit to the secretary of state along with the official  
33 canvass the total by party of partisan ballots selected in that primary  
34 election by voters who registered as no party preference, as independents  
35 or as members of a political party that is not qualified for  
36 representation on the ballot.

37 C. A certificate of election shall not be issued to a write-in  
38 candidate for precinct committeeman or a write-in candidate for a  
39 nonpartisan office unless the candidate receives a number of votes  
40 equivalent to at least the same number of signatures required by section  
41 16-322 for nominating petitions for the same office.

42 D. Except as provided in subsection C of this section, a letter  
43 declaring nomination shall not be issued to a write-in candidate of a  
44 party that has not qualified for continued representation on the official  
45 ballot pursuant to section 16-804 unless the candidate receives a

1 plurality of the votes of the party for the office for which the candidate  
2 is a candidate.

3 E. Except as provided by subsection C of this section, a letter  
4 declaring nomination shall not be issued to a write-in candidate of a  
5 party qualified for continued representation on the official ballot unless  
6 the candidate receives a number of votes equivalent to at least the same  
7 number of signatures required by section 16-322 for nominating petitions  
8 for the same office.

9 F. A certificate of election shall not be issued to presidential  
10 electors who are pledged to a write-in candidate for president unless that  
11 candidate received the highest number of votes cast for the office of  
12 president.

13 Sec. 3. Section 16-646, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to  
14 read:

15 16-646. Statement, contents and mailing of official canvass

16 A. When the result of the canvass is determined **AND ACKNOWLEDGED**  
17 **WITHOUT PREJUDICE AS PRESCRIBED BY SECTION 16-642**, a statement, known and  
18 designated as the official canvass, shall be entered on the official  
19 record of the election district that: ~~shall show~~

20 1. **SHOWS:**

21 ~~1.~~ (a) The number of ballots cast in each precinct and in the  
22 county.

23 ~~2.~~ (b) The number of ballots rejected in each precinct and in the  
24 county.

25 ~~3.~~ (c) The titles of the offices voted for and the names of the  
26 persons, together with the party designation, if any, of each person voted  
27 for to fill the offices.

28 ~~4.~~ (d) The number of votes by precincts and county received by  
29 each candidate.

30 ~~5.~~ (e) For each candidate race in each political subdivision  
31 prescribed by section 16-204.01, the number of ballots cast and the number  
32 of active registered voters in each political subdivision and portion of a  
33 political subdivision for which a candidate may be elected.

34 ~~6.~~ (f) The numbers and a brief title of each proposed  
35 constitutional amendment and each initiated or referred measure voted on.

36 ~~7.~~ (g) The number of votes by precincts and county for and against  
37 such proposed amendment or measure.

38 **2. INCLUDES A COPY OF THE SWORN STATEMENTS OF THE OFFICER WHO**  
39 **CONDUCTED THE ELECTION AND THE OFFICER WHO TABULATED THE BALLOTS AS**  
40 **PRESCRIBED BY SECTION 16-642.**

41 B. The certified permanent copy of the official canvass for all  
42 offices and ballot measures **AND ITS ACKNOWLEDGMENT WITHOUT PREJUDICE BY**  
43 **THE CANVASSING BODY**, except offices and ballot measures in a city or town  
44 election and nonpartisan election returns, shall be mailed immediately to

1 the secretary of state who shall maintain and preserve it as a permanent  
2 public record.

3 C. The board of supervisors shall first mail with a postmark or  
4 other similar date and time indicator, then deliver electronically a copy  
5 of the official canvass for all offices and ballot measures in the primary  
6 and general elections to the secretary of state in a uniform electronic  
7 computer media format that shall be agreed on between the secretary of  
8 state and all county election officials. The uniform format shall be  
9 designed to facilitate the computer analysis of election results for  
10 offices and ballot measures that are statewide or are common to more than  
11 one county. The electronic copy of the official canvass from the board of  
12 supervisors is sufficient for the secretary of state to conduct and issue  
13 the statewide canvass if the electronic copy includes a scan or other  
14 similar evidence that the paper official canvass was mailed before the  
15 electronic version was sent.

16 D. The certified permanent copy of the official canvass for all  
17 offices and ballot measures in a city or town election **AND ITS**  
18 **ACKNOWLEDGMENT WITHOUT PREJUDICE BY THE GOVERNING BODY AND A COPY OF THE**  
19 **SWORN STATEMENTS OF THE OFFICER WHO CONDUCTED THE ELECTION AND THE OFFICER**  
20 **WHO TABULATED THE BALLOTS AS PRESCRIBED BY SECTION 16-642** shall be filed  
21 with the appropriate city or town clerk, or in a special district election  
22 with the clerk of the board of supervisors, who shall maintain and  
23 preserve it as a permanent public record.