

# Getting Involved in Your Local Water Board: How to Run in an Election

Hundreds of thousands of residents in unincorporated communities are served water by public, resident-led local water boards. These boards – generally run by a five-member board of directors – offer an opportunity for community members to run for office, to step into their power, and to make a difference in their community. See our fact sheet, “**Getting Involved in Your Local Water Board: An Overview**,” for further information on local water boards.

This fact sheet provides an overview of the process of running for a seat on your local water board. Specifically, it outlines the requirements for running for the two most common types of local water boards – Community Services Districts and Public Utility Districts – in Fresno, Kern, Kings, and Tulare counties. If you have questions about the information provided, or if you’re interested in running for a seat, contact your county elections office or call CWC at (559) 733-0219.

## When will my water board hold an election?

Local water boards are typically five-member boards on which each director serves a four-year term. Elections are staggered and take place every two years; most boards hold elections in even-numbered years. For instance, a board might have three seats up for election in November 2018, and the remaining two up for election in November 2020. In order to run in the November 2018 election, all required paperwork must be submitted to your county elections office within the window below:

**Window to submit candidacy paperwork for Fresno, Kern, Kings, and Tulare County  
special district water boards:  
Monday, July 16, 2018 — Friday, August 10, 2018**

## How can I start the process of running for a water board seat?

*To appear on the ballot for your local Community Service District or Public Utilities District election, follow these two steps:*

- 1) Contact your local county elections office to verify that the address where you are registered to vote qualifies you for the position you are seeking.
- 2) Arrange to pick up the required Declaration of Candidacy form and additional forms from your county elections office. You’ll need to sign the forms in-person at the county elections office, under the supervision of the county elections office clerk. Once the forms are signed, you can complete the rest of the forms on the spot, or review them at home and return to the elections office at a later date. Note that all potential candidates must submit the required forms within the filing window to appear on the ballot.



*Community residents share personal testimonies about their access to water.*

*Beyond these requirements, county elections offices encourage candidates to carry out these two additional steps:*

- 3) Write a candidate statement that will be shared with voters. In many districts, the county elections office will charge a fee to process the candidate statement. Candidate statements must be submitted, and paid for, by the same filing deadline as the forms listed above.
- 4) After submitting the required paperwork, share with your community that you’re running for a seat on the board and encourage community members to participate in the election, either by voting, or encouraging others to vote!

## Am I eligible to run for a seat?

To run for a seat on your Community Services District or Public Utilities District in Fresno, Kern, Kings, or Tulare county, you must be: 1) A registered voter in the district where you’re running, and 2) Not on parole for a felony.

# What are the forms I need to submit to file for candidacy?

**Declaration of Candidacy:** This document states that a candidate is running for a specified position. The information on the form includes a short candidate profile and desired office. It typically takes 30-45 minutes to complete, and must be completed in the county elections office during the filing period.

**Ballot Designation:** This form notes how a candidate would like to list their name and job description on the ballot. The Ballot Designation Form is limited to three words, and is typically the candidate's current professional occupation title.

**Candidate Statement:** A candidate statement is a short personal statement, written by the candidate, in which they describe their qualifications and why they've decided to run. The statement is included in the voter information guide that voters receive in the mail before the election. *Though submitting a candidate statement is optional, Community Water Center recommends that you do so. Candidate statements help voters make an informed decision and they're an opportunity for you to set yourself apart – and explain why you're running.* Candidate statements do not need to be completed at the same time as the declaration of candidacy, but they must be turned in within the candidate filing period; typically, candidates turn in and pay for their statements when they submit their declaration of candidacy. Candidates must submit both a signed paper copy and an email version of the statement. The email addresses for online submission of candidate statements are:

Fresno County: [clerk-election@co.fresno.ca.us](mailto:clerk-election@co.fresno.ca.us)  
Tulare County: [eolivera@co.tulare.ca.us](mailto:eolivera@co.tulare.ca.us)

Kings County: [Melinda.Hernandez@co.kings.ca.us](mailto:Melinda.Hernandez@co.kings.ca.us)  
Kern County: <http://kernvote.com>

## Additional forms:

**Form 470 – Candidate Campaign Statement.** Required for all candidates who spend **less than \$2,000** on their campaign. This form contains information on the candidate, as well as any financial transactions for their campaign.

- *Form 460 is also available if candidates are planning on spending or receiving **more than \$2,000** on their campaign. Though this option is available, it is highly unlikely that local water board candidates would spend or receive more than \$2,000 over the course of their campaign.*

**Form 501 – Candidate Intention Statement.** This form is filled out by all candidates who intend to run for any government office in the state of California, which includes information on candidate name and address, desired office, and a verification statement.

**Form 700 – Statement of Economic Interest.** This is a document which provides transparency into candidates' economic interests, and is aimed to ensure that candidates are not running for office for personal financial gain. On this form, candidates will share information about any relevant income, investments, gifts, or business interests that may cause a conflict of interest.

## County Elections Offices: Contact information

**Tulare County Elections Office**  
Phone: (559) 624-7300  
Address: 5951 S. Mooney Blvd, Visalia, CA 93277  
Email: [AV1@co.tulare.ca.us](mailto:AV1@co.tulare.ca.us)  
Web: [www.tularecoelections.org](http://www.tularecoelections.org)

**Kern County Elections Office**  
Phone: (661) 868-3590; toll free (800) 452-8683  
Address: 1115 Truxtun Ave, 1st floor, Bakersfield, CA 93301  
Email: [shugarta@kerncounty.com](mailto:shugarta@kerncounty.com)  
Web: [www.kernvote.com](http://www.kernvote.com)

**Fresno County Elections Office**  
Phone: (559) 600-8683  
Address: 2221 Kern St, Fresno, CA 93721  
Email: [clerk-elections@co.fresno.ca.us](mailto:clerk-elections@co.fresno.ca.us)  
Web: [www.fresnovote.com](http://www.fresnovote.com)

**Kings County Elections Office**  
Phone: (559) 852-4401  
Address: 1400 W Lacey Blvd., Hanford, CA 93230  
Email: [cheryl.ballin@co.kings.ca.us](mailto:cheryl.ballin@co.kings.ca.us)  
Web: [www.countyofkings.com](http://www.countyofkings.com)

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To learn more, contact Adriana Renteria at (559)733-0219 or [adriana.renteria@communitywatercenter.org](mailto:adriana.renteria@communitywatercenter.org)



**COMMUNITY WATER CENTER**  
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