

Lisa Shepherd proposes the following substitute bill:

Candidate Petition Amendments

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Lisa Shepherd

Senate Sponsor:

LONG TITLE

Committee Note:

The Government Operations Interim Committee recommended this bill.

Legislative Vote: 6 voting for 5 voting against 6 absent

General Description:

This bill amends provisions related to candidate nomination petitions.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- ▶ requires a candidate who seeks the nomination for an elective office by gathering signatures of registered voters to submit the signatures to the county clerk of each registered voter's residence;
- ▶ provides that a county clerk may only certify the signature of a registered voter described above if the registered voter is a resident of the county clerk's county;
- ▶ for a signature gathering candidate who seeks the nomination for an office in a district where the officeholder is elected by the voters from more than one county, requires the county clerk of each county to which the candidate submits signatures to:
 - count the number of valid signatures submitted by the candidate; and
 - certify the number of valid signatures to the lieutenant governor;
- ▶ for an elective office described above, requires the lieutenant governor to:
 - count the total number of valid signatures received from each county clerk; and
 - if the aggregate number of valid signatures is sufficient for the candidate to qualify for placement on the ballot, certify the signatures;
- ▶ amends the candidate nomination petition forms to specify that only a registered voter residing in the county where a candidate submits signatures for verification should sign the candidate's nomination petition;
- ▶ for a candidate for elective office seeking the nomination of a qualified political party

29 through signature-gathering, shortens the deadline for the candidate to submit signatures
 30 to an election official from 14 to 21 days before the day on which the party holds a
 31 convention to nominate a candidate for the same elective office; and
 32 ▸ makes technical and conforming changes.

33 **Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

34 None

35 **Other Special Clauses:**

36 This bill provides a special effective date.

37 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

38 AMENDS:

39 **20A-1-501**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, First Special Session, Chapter 16

40 **20A-1-1002**, as enacted by Laws of Utah 2023, Chapter 116

41 **20A-3a-106**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapters 381, 448

42 **20A-6-301**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 39

43 **20A-6-302**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapters 39, 448

44 **20A-6-304**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2021, Chapter 136

45 **20A-9-403**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapters 39, 448

46 **20A-9-405**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 38

47 **20A-9-406**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Second Special Session, Chapter 2

48 **20A-9-408**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Second Special Session, Chapter 2

49 **20A-9-502**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Second Special Session, Chapter 2

50 **20A-9-701**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2015, Chapter 296

52 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

53 Section 1. Section **20A-1-501** is amended to read:

54 **20A-1-501 . Candidate vacancies -- Procedure for filling.**

55 (1) As used in this section, "central committee" means:

56 (a) the state central committee of a political party, for a candidate for:

57 (i) United States senator, United States representative, governor, lieutenant governor,
 58 attorney general, state treasurer, or state auditor; or

59 (ii) state legislator if the legislative district encompasses all or a portion of more than
 60 one county; or

61 (b) the county central committee of a political party, for a party candidate seeking an
 62 office, other than an office described in Subsection (1)(a), elected at an election held

- 63 in an even-numbered year.
- 64 (2) Except as provided in Subsection (6), the central committee may certify the name of
65 another candidate to the appropriate election officer if:
- 66 (a) for a registered political party that will have a candidate on a ballot in a primary
67 election:
- 68 (i) after the close of the period for filing a declaration of candidacy and continuing
69 through the day before the day on which the lieutenant governor provides the list
70 described in Subsection [~~20A-9-403(4)(a)~~] 20A-9-403(9)(a), only one or two
71 candidates from that party have filed a declaration of candidacy for that office and
72 one or both dies, resigns as a candidate, or is disqualified as a candidate; and
- 73 (ii) the central committee provides written certification of the replacement candidate
74 to the appropriate election officer before the day on which the lieutenant governor
75 provides the list described in Subsection [~~20A-9-403(4)(a)~~] 20A-9-403(9)(a);
- 76 (b) for a registered political party that does not have a candidate on the ballot in a
77 primary, but will have a candidate on the ballot for a regular general election:
- 78 (i) after the close of the period for filing a declaration of candidacy and continuing
79 through the day before the day on which the lieutenant governor makes the
80 certification described in Section 20A-5-409, the party's candidate dies, resigns as
81 a candidate, or is disqualified as a candidate; and
- 82 (ii) the central committee provides written certification of the replacement candidate
83 to the appropriate election officer before the day on which the lieutenant governor
84 makes the certification described in Section 20A-5-409; or
- 85 (c) for a registered political party with a candidate certified as winning a primary
86 election:
- 87 (i) after the close of the period for filing a declaration of candidacy and continuing
88 through the day before the day on which the lieutenant governor makes the
89 certification described in Section 20A-5-409, the party's candidate dies, resigns as
90 a candidate, or is disqualified as a candidate; and
- 91 (ii) the central committee provides written certification of the replacement candidate
92 to the appropriate election officer before the day on which the lieutenant governor
93 makes the certification described in Section 20A-5-409.
- 94 (3) If no more than two candidates from a political party have filed a declaration of
95 candidacy for an office elected at a regular general election and one resigns to become
96 the party candidate for another position, the central committee of that political party may

- 97 certify the name of another candidate to the appropriate election officer.
- 98 (4) Each replacement candidate shall file a declaration of candidacy as required by Chapter
99 9, Part 2, Candidate Qualifications and Declarations of Candidacy.
- 100 (5)(a) The name of a candidate who is certified under Subsection (2)(a) after the
101 deadline described in Subsection (2)(a)(ii) may not appear on the primary election
102 ballot.
- 103 (b) The name of a candidate who is certified under Subsection (2)(b) after the deadline
104 described in Subsection (2)(b)(ii) may not appear on the general election ballot.
- 105 (c) The name of a candidate who is certified under Subsection (2)(c) after the deadline
106 described in Subsection (2)(c)(ii) may not appear on the general election ballot.
- 107 (6) A political party may not replace a candidate who is disqualified for failure to timely
108 file a campaign disclosure financial report under Chapter 11, Campaign and Financial
109 Reporting Requirements, or Section 17-70-403.
- 110 (7) This section does not apply to a candidate vacancy for a nonpartisan office.

111 Section 2. Section **20A-1-1002** is amended to read:

112 **20A-1-1002 . Verification of voter registration.**

- 113 (1) A clerk shall use the [~~following~~] procedures described in this section to determine
114 whether a signer of a petition is a registered voter and to determine the address where
115 the voter is registered to vote[.] .
- 116 [~~(a)~~] (2) Except as provided in Subsection 20A-9-403(4)(b)(i), 20A-9-408(9)(d)(ii)(A), or
117 20A-9-502(6)(a):
- 118 (a) if a signer's name and address provided by the individual with the individual's
119 petition signature exactly match a name and address shown on the official register
120 and the signer's signature appears substantially similar to the signature on the
121 statewide voter registration database, the clerk shall declare the signature valid for the
122 district or jurisdiction in which the signer is registered to vote;
- 123 (b) if there is no exact match of an address and a name, the clerk shall declare the
124 signature valid for the district or jurisdiction in which the signer is registered to vote,
125 if:
- 126 (i) the address provided by the individual with the individual's petition signature
127 matches the address of an individual on the official register with a substantially
128 similar name; and
- 129 (ii) the signer's signature appears substantially similar to the signature on the
130 statewide voter registration database of the individual described in Subsection [

- 131 ~~(1)(b)(i)~~ (2)(b)(i); or
- 132 (c) if there is no match of an address and a substantially similar name, the clerk shall
- 133 declare the signature valid for the district or jurisdiction in which the signer is
- 134 registered to vote if:
- 135 (i) the birth date or age provided by the individual with the individual's petition
- 136 signature matches the birth date or age of an individual on the official register
- 137 with a substantially similar name; and
- 138 (ii) the signer's signature appears substantially similar to the signature on the
- 139 statewide voter registration database of the individual described in Subsection [
- 140 ~~(1)(e)(i)~~ (2)(c)(i).
- 141 ~~[(2)] (3)~~ If a signature is not declared valid under Subsection [~~(1)(a)~~] (2)(a), (b), or (c), the
- 142 clerk shall declare the signature to be invalid.

143 Section 3. Section **20A-3a-106** is amended to read:

144 **20A-3a-106 . Rulemaking authority relating to conducting an election.**

145 The director of elections, within the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, may make rules,

146 in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, establishing

147 requirements for:

- 148 (1) a return envelope, to ensure uniformity and security of the envelopes;
- 149 (2) complying with the signature comparison audit requirements described in Section
- 150 20A-3a-402.5;
- 151 (3) conducting and documenting the identity verification process described in Subsection
- 152 20A-3a-401(7)(b); or
- 153 (4) establishing specific requirements and procedures for an election officer to:
- 154 (a) perform the signature comparison audits described in Subsection [~~20A-9-408(9)(e)~~]
- 155 20A-9-408(9)(h); or
- 156 (b) fulfill the chain of custody requirements described in Section 20A-9-408.3.

157 Section 4. Section **20A-6-301** is amended to read:

158 **20A-6-301 . Manual ballots -- Regular general election.**

- 159 (1) Each election officer shall ensure that:
- 160 (a) all manual ballots furnished for use at the regular general election contain:
- 161 (i) no captions or other endorsements except as provided in this section;
- 162 (ii) no symbols, markings, or other descriptions of a political party or group, except
- 163 for a registered political party that has chosen to nominate its candidates in
- 164 accordance with Section 20A-9-403; and

- 165 (iii) no indication that a candidate for elective office has been nominated by, or has
 166 been endorsed by, or is in any way affiliated with a political party or group, unless
 167 the candidate has been nominated by a registered political party in accordance
 168 with Subsection 20A-9-202(4) or Subsection [~~20A-9-403(5)~~] 20A-9-403(10);
- 169 (b) at the top of the ballot, the following endorsements are printed in 18 point bold type:
- 170 (i) "Official Ballot for ____ County, Utah";
- 171 (ii) the date of the election; and
- 172 (iii) the words "certified by the Clerk of _____ County" or, as applicable, the
 173 name of a combined office that includes the duties of a county clerk;
- 174 (c) unaffiliated candidates, candidates not affiliated with a registered political party, and
 175 all other candidates for elective office who were not nominated by a registered
 176 political party in accordance with Subsection 20A-9-202(4) or Subsection [
 177 ~~20A-9-403(5)~~] 20A-9-403(10), are listed with the other candidates for the same office
 178 in accordance with Sections 20A-6-109 and 20A-6-110, without a party name or title;
- 179 (d) each ticket containing the lists of candidates, including the party name and device,
 180 are separated by heavy parallel lines;
- 181 (e) the offices to be filled are plainly printed immediately above the names of the
 182 candidates for those offices;
- 183 (f) the names of candidates are printed in capital letters, not less than one-eighth nor
 184 more than one-fourth of an inch high in heavy-faced type not smaller than 10 point,
 185 between lines or rules three-eighths of an inch apart; and
- 186 (g) on a ticket for a race in which a voter is authorized to cast a write-in vote and in
 187 which a write-in candidate is qualified under Section 20A-9-601:
- 188 (i) the ballot includes a space for a write-in candidate immediately following the last
 189 candidate listed on that ticket; or
- 190 (ii) for the offices of president and vice president and governor and lieutenant
 191 governor, the ballot includes two spaces for write-in candidates immediately
 192 following the last candidates on that ticket, one placed above the other, to enable
 193 the entry of two valid write-in candidates.
- 194 (2) An election officer shall ensure that:
- 195 (a) each individual nominated by any registered political party under Subsection
 196 20A-9-202(4) or Subsection [~~20A-9-403(5)~~] 20A-9-403(10), and no other individual,
 197 is placed on the ballot:
- 198 (i) under the registered political party's name, if any; or

- 199 (ii) under the title of the registered political party as designated by them in their
 200 certificates of nomination or petition, or, if none is designated, then under some
 201 suitable title;
- 202 (b) the names of all unaffiliated candidates that qualify as required in Chapter 9, Part 5,
 203 Candidates not Affiliated with a Party, are placed on the ballot;
- 204 (c) the names of the candidates for president and vice president are used on the ballot
 205 instead of the names of the presidential electors; and
- 206 (d) the ballots contain no other names.
- 207 (3) When the ballot contains a nonpartisan section, the election officer shall ensure that:
- 208 (a) the designation of the office to be filled in the election and the number of candidates
 209 to be elected are printed in type not smaller than eight point;
- 210 (b) the words designating the office are printed flush with the left-hand margin;
- 211 (c) the words, "Vote for one" or "Vote for up to ____ (the number of candidates for
 212 which the voter may vote)" extend to the extreme right of the column;
- 213 (d) the nonpartisan candidates are grouped according to the office for which they are
 214 candidates;
- 215 (e) the names in each group are placed in accordance with Sections 20A-6-109 and
 216 20A-6-110, with the surnames last; and
- 217 (f) each group is preceded by the designation of the office for which the candidates seek
 218 election, and the words, "Vote for one" or "Vote for up to ____ (the number of
 219 candidates for which the voter may vote)," according to the number to be elected.
- 220 (4) Each election officer shall ensure that:
- 221 (a) proposed amendments to the Utah Constitution are listed on the ballot in accordance
 222 with Section 20A-6-107;
- 223 (b) ballot propositions submitted to the voters are listed on the ballot in accordance with
 224 Section 20A-6-107;
- 225 (c) bond propositions that have qualified for the ballot are listed on the ballot under the
 226 title assigned to each bond proposition under Section 11-14-206; and
- 227 (d) the judicial retention section of the ballot includes a statement at the beginning
 228 directing voters to the Judicial Performance Evaluation Commission's website in
 229 accordance with Subsection 20A-12-201(4).

230 Section 5. Section **20A-6-302** is amended to read:

231 **20A-6-302 . Manual ballots -- Placement of candidates' names.**

- 232 (1) An election officer shall ensure, for manual ballots in regular general elections, that:

- 233 (a) each candidate is listed by party, if nominated by a registered political party under
234 Subsection 20A-9-202(4) or Subsection [~~20A-9-403(5)~~] 20A-9-403(10);
- 235 (b) candidates' surnames are listed in alphabetical order on the ballots when two or more
236 candidates' names are required to be listed on a ticket under the title of an office; and
- 237 (c) the names of candidates are placed on the ballot in:
- 238 (i) the manner described in Section 20A-6-109; and
- 239 (ii) the order described in Section 20A-6-110.
- 240 (2)(a) When there is only one candidate for county attorney at the regular general
241 election in counties that have three or fewer registered voters of the county who are
242 licensed active members in good standing of the Utah State Bar, the county clerk
243 shall cause that candidate's name and party affiliation, if any, to be placed on a
244 separate section of the ballot with the following question: "Shall (name of candidate)
245 be elected to the office of county attorney? Yes ____ No ____."
- 246 (b) If the number of "Yes" votes exceeds the number of "No" votes, the candidate is
247 elected to the office of county attorney.
- 248 (c) If the number of "No" votes exceeds the number of "Yes" votes, the candidate is not
249 elected and may not take office, nor may the candidate continue in the office past the
250 end of the term resulting from any prior election or appointment.
- 251 (d) When the name of only one candidate for county attorney is printed on the ballot
252 under authority of this Subsection (2), the county clerk may not count any write-in
253 votes received for the office of county attorney.
- 254 (e) If no qualified individual files for the office of county attorney or if the candidate is
255 not elected by the voters, the county legislative body shall appoint the county
256 attorney as provided in Section 20A-1-509.2.
- 257 (f) If the candidate whose name would, except for this Subsection (2)(f), be placed on
258 the ballot under Subsection (2)(a) has been elected on a ballot under Subsection (2)(a)
259 to the two consecutive terms immediately preceding the term for which the candidate
260 is seeking election, Subsection (2)(a) does not apply and that candidate shall be
261 considered to be an unopposed candidate the same as any other unopposed candidate
262 for another office, unless a petition is filed with the county clerk before 5 p.m. no
263 later than the day before that year's primary election that:
- 264 (i) requests the procedure set forth in Subsection (2)(a) to be followed; and
- 265 (ii) contains the signatures of registered voters in the county representing in number
266 at least 25% of all votes cast in the county for all candidates for governor at the

- 267 last election at which a governor was elected.
- 268 (3)(a) When there is only one candidate for district attorney at the regular general
 269 election in a prosecution district that has three or fewer registered voters of the
 270 district who are licensed active members in good standing of the Utah State Bar, the
 271 county clerk shall cause that candidate's name and party affiliation, if any, to be
 272 placed on a separate section of the ballot with the following question: "Shall (name of
 273 candidate) be elected to the office of district attorney? Yes ____ No ____".
- 274 (b) If the number of "Yes" votes exceeds the number of "No" votes, the candidate is
 275 elected to the office of district attorney.
- 276 (c) If the number of "No" votes exceeds the number of "Yes" votes, the candidate is not
 277 elected and may not take office, nor may the candidate continue in the office past the
 278 end of the term resulting from any prior election or appointment.
- 279 (d) When the name of only one candidate for district attorney is printed on the ballot
 280 under authority of this Subsection (3), the county clerk may not count any write-in
 281 votes received for the office of district attorney.
- 282 (e) If no qualified individual files for the office of district attorney, or if the only
 283 candidate is not elected by the voters under this subsection, the county legislative
 284 body shall appoint a new district attorney for a four-year term as provided in Section
 285 20A-1-509.2.
- 286 (f) If the candidate whose name would, except for this Subsection (3)(f), be placed on
 287 the ballot under Subsection (3)(a) has been elected on a ballot under Subsection (3)(a)
 288 to the two consecutive terms immediately preceding the term for which the candidate
 289 is seeking election, Subsection (3)(a) does not apply and that candidate shall be
 290 considered to be an unopposed candidate the same as any other unopposed candidate
 291 for another office, unless a petition is filed with the county clerk before 5 p.m. no
 292 later than the day before that year's primary election that:
- 293 (i) requests the procedure set forth in Subsection (3)(a) to be followed; and
 294 (ii) contains the signatures of registered voters in the county representing in number
 295 at least 25% of all votes cast in the county for all candidates for governor at the
 296 last election at which a governor was elected.

297 Section 6. Section **20A-6-304** is amended to read:

298 **20A-6-304 . Regular general election -- Mechanical ballots.**

- 299 (1) Each election officer shall ensure that:
- 300 (a) the format and content of a mechanical ballot is arranged in approximately the same

- 301 order as manual ballots;
- 302 (b) the titles of offices and the names of candidates are displayed in vertical columns or
303 in a series of separate displays;
- 304 (c) the mechanical ballot is of sufficient length to include, after the list of candidates:
305 (i) the names of candidates for judicial offices and any other nonpartisan offices; and
306 (ii) any ballot propositions submitted to the voters for their approval or rejection;
- 307 (d) the office titles are displayed above or at the side of the names of candidates so as to
308 indicate clearly the candidates for each office and the number to be elected;
- 309 (e) the party designation of each candidate who has been nominated by a registered
310 political party under Subsection 20A-9-202(4) or Subsection [~~20A-9-403(5)~~
311 20A-9-403(10)] is displayed adjacent to the candidate's name; and
- 312 (f) if possible, all candidates for one office are grouped in one column or upon one
313 display screen.

314 (2) Each election officer shall ensure that:

- 315 (a) proposed amendments to the Utah Constitution are displayed in accordance with
316 Section 20A-6-107;
- 317 (b) ballot propositions submitted to the voters are displayed in accordance with Section
318 20A-6-107;
- 319 (c) bond propositions that have qualified for the ballot are displayed under the title
320 assigned to each bond proposition under Section 11-14-206; and
- 321 (d) the judicial retention section of the ballot includes a statement at the beginning
322 directing voters to the Judicial Performance Evaluation Commission's website in
323 accordance with Subsection 20A-12-201(4).

324 Section 7. Section **20A-9-403** is amended to read:

325 **20A-9-403 . Regular primary elections.**

- 326 (1)(a) Candidates for elective office that are to be filled at the next regular general
327 election shall be nominated in a regular primary election by direct vote of the people
328 in the manner prescribed in this section. The regular primary election is held on the
329 date specified in Section 20A-1-201.5. Nothing in this section shall affect a
330 candidate's ability to qualify for a regular general election's ballot as an unaffiliated
331 candidate under Section 20A-9-501 or to participate in a regular general election as a
332 write-in candidate under Section 20A-9-601.
- 333 (b) Each registered political party that chooses to have the names of the registered
334 political party's candidates for elective office featured with party affiliation on the

335 ballot at a regular general election shall comply with the requirements of this section
336 and shall nominate the registered political party's candidates for elective office in the
337 manner described in this section.

338 (c) A filing officer may not permit an official ballot at a regular general election to be
339 produced or used if the ballot denotes affiliation between a registered political party
340 or any other political group and a candidate for elective office who is not nominated
341 in the manner prescribed in this section or in Subsection 20A-9-202(4).

342 (d) Unless noted otherwise, the dates in this section refer to those that occur in each
343 even-numbered year in which a regular general election will be held.

344 (2)(a) Each registered political party, in a statement filed with the lieutenant governor,
345 shall:

346 (i) either declare the registered political party's intent to participate in the next regular
347 primary election or declare that the registered political party chooses not to have
348 the names of the registered political party's candidates for elective office featured
349 on the ballot at the next regular general election; and

350 (ii) if the registered political party participates in the upcoming regular primary
351 election, identify one or more registered political parties whose members may
352 vote for the registered political party's candidates and whether individuals
353 identified as unaffiliated with a political party may vote for the registered political
354 party's candidates.

355 (b)(i) A registered political party that is a continuing political party shall file the
356 statement described in Subsection (2)(a) with the lieutenant governor no later than
357 5 p.m. on November 30 of each odd-numbered year.

358 (ii) An organization that is seeking to become a registered political party under
359 Section 20A-8-103 shall file the statement described in Subsection (2)(a) at the
360 time that the registered political party files the petition described in Section
361 20A-8-103.

362 (3)(a) Except as provided in Subsection [~~(3)(e)~~] (6), an individual who submits a
363 declaration of candidacy under Section 20A-9-202 shall appear as a candidate for
364 elective office on the regular primary ballot of the registered political party listed on
365 the declaration of candidacy only if the individual is certified by the appropriate
366 filing officer as having submitted a nomination petition that was:

367 (i) circulated and completed in accordance with Section 20A-9-405; and

368 (ii) signed by at least 2% of the registered political party's members who reside in the

369 political division of the office that the individual seeks.

370 (b)(i) A candidate for elective office shall, in accordance with Section 20A-9-408.3,
 371 submit signatures for a nomination petition to the ~~[appropriate filing officer]~~
 372 county clerk of the nomination petition signer's residence for verification and
 373 certification no later than 5 p.m. on March 31.

374 (ii) A candidate may supplement the candidate's submissions at any time on or before
 375 the filing deadline.

376 (c)(i) The lieutenant governor shall determine for each elective office the total
 377 number of signatures that must be submitted under Subsection (3)(a)(ii) or
 378 20A-9-408(8) by counting the aggregate number of individuals residing in each
 379 elective office's political division who have designated a particular registered
 380 political party on the individuals' voter registration forms on or before November
 381 15 of each odd-numbered year.

382 (ii) The lieutenant governor shall publish the determination for each elective office
 383 no later than November 30 of each odd-numbered year.

384 (d) The county clerk shall:

385 (i) consider an active and inactive voter eligible to sign a nomination petition;

386 (ii) consider an individual who signs a nomination petition a member of a registered
 387 political party for purposes of Subsection (3)(a)(ii) if the individual has designated
 388 the registered political party as the individual's party membership on the
 389 individual's voter registration form;

390 (iii) except as provided in Subsection (4) or Section 20A-21-201, and in accordance
 391 with Section 20A-9-408.3, use the procedures described in Section 20A-1-1002 to
 392 verify submitted nomination petition signatures in a transparent and orderly
 393 manner, or use statistical sampling procedures to verify submitted nomination
 394 petition signatures in accordance with rules made under Subsection (7), no later
 395 than 14 calendar days after the day on which a candidate submits the signatures to
 396 the county clerk; and

397 (iv) except as provided in Subsection (5), for each qualifying candidate for elective
 398 office who submits a nomination petition to the county clerk, issue the
 399 certification described in Subsection (3)(a) no later than the deadline described in
 400 Subsection 20A-9-202(1)(b).

401 ~~[(d) The filing officer shall:]~~

402 ~~[(i) except as otherwise provided in Section 20A-21-201, and in accordance with~~

403 ~~Section 20A-9-408.3, verify signatures on nomination petitions in a transparent~~
 404 ~~and orderly manner, no later than 14 calendar days after the day on which a~~
 405 ~~candidate submits the signatures to the filing officer;]~~
 406 ~~[(ii) for all qualifying candidates for elective office who submit nomination petitions~~
 407 ~~to the filing officer, issue certifications referenced in Subsection (3)(a) no later~~
 408 ~~than the deadline described in Subsection 20A-9-202(1)(b);]~~
 409 ~~[(iii) consider active and inactive voters eligible to sign nomination petitions;]~~
 410 ~~[(iv) consider an individual who signs a nomination petition a member of a registered~~
 411 ~~political party for purposes of Subsection (3)(a)(ii) if the individual has designated~~
 412 ~~that registered political party as the individual's party membership on the~~
 413 ~~individual's voter registration form; and]~~
 414 ~~[(v) except as otherwise provided in Section 20A-21-201 and with the assistance of~~
 415 ~~the county clerk as applicable, use the procedures described in Section 20A-1-1002~~
 416 ~~to verify submitted nomination petition signatures, or use statistical sampling~~
 417 ~~procedures to verify submitted nomination petition signatures in accordance with~~
 418 ~~rules made under Subsection (3)(f).]~~

419 (4)(a) In reviewing a candidate signature packet, the county clerk shall count only an
 420 individual who signed with a holographic signature:

421 (i) who is a registered voter residing within the county clerk's county and the political
 422 division that the candidate seeks to represent; and

423 (ii) who did not sign any other nomination petition for that office.

424 (b) If, in verifying signatures under Section 20A-1-1002, the county clerk determines
 425 that a registered voter who signed a nomination petition is not a resident of the
 426 county clerk's county, the county clerk:

427 (i) shall declare the signature invalid under Subsection 20A-1-1002(3); and

428 (ii) may not certify the signature.

429 (5)(a) In an election for federal office, constitutional office, or multicounty office, the
 430 county clerk shall, instead of taking the action described in Subsection (3)(d)(iv):

431 (i) count the number of valid nomination petition signatures submitted by the
 432 candidate; and

433 (ii) no later than seven calendar days before the day of the deadline described in
 434 Subsection 20A-9-202(1)(b), certify the number of valid signatures to the
 435 lieutenant governor.

436 (b) The lieutenant governor shall, upon receiving the certification described in

437 Subsection (5)(a)(ii) from the county clerk of each county where the candidate
 438 submits nomination petition signatures for verification:

439 (i) add together the total number of signatures declared valid by each county clerk;
 440 and

441 (ii) if the aggregate number of valid signatures is equal to or more than the total
 442 number of signatures required for the candidate to qualify for placement on the
 443 regular primary ballot, issue the certification described in Subsection (3)(a) no
 444 later than the deadline described in Subsection 20A-9-202(1)(b).

445 ~~(6)~~~~(e)~~ Notwithstanding any other provision in ~~[this Subsection (3)]~~ Subsection (3), (4),
 446 (5), (7), or (8), a candidate for lieutenant governor may appear on the regular primary
 447 ballot of a registered political party without submitting nomination petitions if the
 448 candidate files a declaration of candidacy and complies with Subsection 20A-9-202
 449 (3).

450 ~~[(f)]~~ (7) In accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, the
 451 director of elections, within the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, may make rules that:

452 ~~[(i)]~~ (a) provide for the use of statistical sampling procedures that:

453 ~~[(A)]~~ (i) filing officers are required to use to verify signatures under Subsection (3)(d);
 454 and

455 ~~[(B)]~~ (ii) reflect a bona fide effort to determine the validity of a candidate's entire
 456 submission, using widely recognized statistical sampling techniques; and

457 ~~[(ii)]~~ (b) provide for the transparent, orderly, and timely submission, verification, and
 458 certification of nomination petition signatures.

459 ~~[(g)]~~ (8) The county clerk shall:

460 ~~[(i)]~~ (a) review the declarations of candidacy filed by candidates for local boards of
 461 education to determine if more than two candidates have filed for the same seat;

462 ~~[(ii)]~~ (b) place the names of all candidates who have filed a declaration of candidacy for a
 463 local board of education seat on the nonpartisan section of the ballot if more than two
 464 candidates have filed for the same seat; and

465 ~~[(iii)]~~ (c) place the local board of education candidates' names on the ballot in accordance
 466 with Sections 20A-6-109 and 20A-6-110.

467 ~~[(4)]~~ (9)(a) Before the deadline described in Subsection 20A-9-409(4)(c), the lieutenant
 468 governor shall provide to the county clerks:

469 (i) a list of the names of all candidates for federal, constitutional, multi-county, single
 470 county, and county offices who have received certifications under Subsection ~~[(3)]~~

- 471 (3)(a), along with instructions on how those names shall appear on the primary
472 election ballot in accordance with Sections 20A-6-109 and 20A-6-110; and
- 473 (ii) a list of unopposed candidates for elective office who have been nominated by a
474 registered political party under Subsection [~~(5)(e)~~] (10)(c) and instruct the county
475 clerks to exclude the unopposed candidates from the primary election ballot.
- 476 (b) A candidate for lieutenant governor and a candidate for governor campaigning as
477 joint-ticket running mates shall appear jointly on the primary election ballot.
- 478 (c) After the county clerk receives the certified list from the lieutenant governor under
479 Subsection [~~(4)(a)~~] (9)(a), the county clerk shall post or publish a primary election notice in
480 substantially the following form:
- 481 "Notice is given that a primary election will be held Tuesday, June _____,
482 _____ (year), to nominate party candidates for the parties and candidates for nonpartisan
483 local school board positions listed on the primary ballot. The polling place for voting precinct
484 _____ is _____. The polls will open at 7 a.m. and continue open until 8 p.m. of the same day.
485 Attest: county clerk."
- 486 [~~(5)~~] (10)(a) A candidate who, at the regular primary election, receives the highest
487 number of votes cast for the office sought by the candidate is:
- 488 (i) nominated for that office by the candidate's registered political party; or
489 (ii) for a nonpartisan local school board position, nominated for that office.
- 490 (b) If two or more candidates are to be elected to the office at the regular general
491 election, those party candidates equal in number to positions to be filled who receive
492 the highest number of votes at the regular primary election are the nominees of the
493 candidates' party for those positions.
- 494 (c)(i) As used in this Subsection [~~(5)(e)~~] (10)(c), a candidate is "unopposed" if:
- 495 (A) no individual other than the candidate receives a certification under
496 Subsection [~~(3)~~] (3)(a) for the regular primary election ballot of the candidate's
497 registered political party for a particular elective office; or
- 498 (B) for an office where more than one individual is to be elected or nominated, the
499 number of candidates who receive certification under Subsection [~~(3)~~] (3)(a) for
500 the regular primary election of the candidate's registered political party does
501 not exceed the total number of candidates to be elected or nominated for that
502 office.
- 503 (ii) A candidate who is unopposed for an elective office in the regular primary
504 election of a registered political party is nominated by the party for that office

505 without appearing on the primary election ballot.

506 [~~(6)~~] (11) The expense of providing all ballots, blanks, or other supplies to be used at any
 507 primary election provided for by this section, and all expenses necessarily incurred in
 508 the preparation for or the conduct of that primary election shall be paid out of the
 509 treasury of the county or state, in the same manner as for the regular general elections.

510 [~~(7)~~] (12) An individual may not file a declaration of candidacy for a registered political
 511 party of which the individual is not a member, except to the extent that the registered
 512 political party permits otherwise under the registered political party's bylaws.

513 Section 8. Section **20A-9-405** is amended to read:

514 **20A-9-405 . Nomination petitions for regular primary elections.**

- 515 (1) This section applies to the form and circulation of nomination petitions for regular
 516 primary elections described in Subsection 20A-9-403(3)(a).
- 517 (2) A candidate for elective office, [~~and the agents~~] or an agent of the candidate, may not
 518 circulate nomination petitions until the candidate has submitted a declaration of
 519 candidacy in accordance with Subsection 20A-9-202(1).
- 520 (3) For the manual candidate qualification process, the nomination petitions shall be in
 521 substantially the following form:
- 522 (a) the petition shall be printed on paper 8-1/2 inches long and 11 inches wide;
- 523 (b) the petition shall be ruled with a horizontal line 3/4 inch from the top, with the space
 524 above that line blank for purposes of binding;
- 525 (c) the petition shall be headed by a caption stating the purpose of the petition [~~and the~~
 526 name of the proposed candidate] , the name of the proposed candidate, and the county
 527 to which the signatures will be submitted for verification;
- 528 (d) the petition shall feature the [~~word "Warning" followed by the~~]following [~~statement~~]
 529 statements in no less than eight-point, single leaded type:
- 530 (i) "WARNING: It is a class A misdemeanor for anyone to knowingly sign a
 531 nomination petition with any name other than the person's own name, or more
 532 than once for the same candidate, or if the person is not registered to vote in this
 533 state."; and
- 534 (ii) "NOTICE: Only a registered voter who is a resident of [insert name of county]
 535 County should sign this nomination petition.";
- 536 (e) the petition shall feature 10 lines spaced one-half inch apart and consecutively
 537 numbered one through 10;
- 538 (f) the signature portion of the petition shall be divided into columns headed by the

539 following titles:

- 540 (i) Registered Voter's Printed Name;
- 541 (ii) Signature of Registered Voter;
- 542 (iii) Party Affiliation of Registered Voter;
- 543 (iv) Birth Date or Age (Optional);
- 544 (v) Street Address, City, Zip Code; [and]
- 545 (vi) County of Residence; and
- 546 [~~vi~~] (vii) Date of Signature; and

547 (g) a photograph of the candidate may appear on the nomination petition.

548 (4) For the electronic candidate qualification process, the lieutenant governor shall design
549 an electronic form, using progressive screens, that includes:

550 (a) the following warning:

551 "Warning: It is a class A misdemeanor for anyone to knowingly sign a nomination
552 petition with any name other than the person's own name, or more than once for the same
553 candidate, or if the person is not registered to vote in this state."; and

554 (b) the following information for each individual who signs the petition:

- 555 (i) name;
- 556 (ii) party affiliation;
- 557 (iii) date of birth or age, (optional);
- 558 (iv) street address, city, zip code;
- 559 (v) date of signature;
- 560 (vi) other information required under Section 20A-21-201; and
- 561 (vii) other information required by the lieutenant governor.

562 (5) For the manual candidate qualification process, if one or more nomination petitions are
563 bound together, a page shall be bound to the nomination petition(s) that features the following
564 printed verification statement to be signed and dated by the petition circulator:

565 "Verification

566 State of Utah, County of ____

567 I, ____, of ____, hereby state that:

568 I am at least 18 years old;

569 All the names that appear on the signature sheets bound to this page were, to the best of
570 my knowledge, signed by the persons who professed to be the persons whose names appear on
571 the signature sheets, and each of them signed the person's name on the signature sheets in my
572 presence;

- 573 I believe that each has printed and signed the person's name and written the person's
574 street address correctly, and that each signer is registered to vote in Utah."
- 575 (6) The lieutenant governor shall prepare and make public model nomination petition forms
576 and associated instructions.
- 577 (7) A nomination petition circulator:
- 578 (a) must be at least 18 years old; and
579 (b) may affiliate with any political party.
- 580 (8) It is unlawful for any person to:
- 581 (a) knowingly sign the nomination petition described in this section or Section
582 20A-9-408:
- 583 (i) with any name other than the person's own name;
584 (ii) more than once for the same candidate; or
585 (iii) if the person is not registered to vote in this state;
- 586 (b) sign the verification of a signature for a nomination petition if the person:
- 587 (i) has not witnessed the signing by those persons whose names appear on the
588 nomination petition; or
589 (ii) knows that a person whose signature appears on the nomination petition is not
590 registered to vote in this state;
- 591 (c) pay compensation to any person to sign a nomination petition; or
592 (d) pay compensation to any person to circulate a nomination petition, if the
593 compensation is based directly on the number of signatures submitted to a [~~filing~~
594 ~~officer~~] county clerk rather than on the number of signatures verified or on some other
595 basis.
- 596 (9) Any person violating Subsection (8) is guilty of a class A misdemeanor.
- 597 (10)(a) A voter who signs a nomination petition may have the voter's signature removed
598 from the petition by, no later than three business days after the day on which the
599 candidate files the petition with the [~~appropriate filing officer~~] county clerk,
600 submitting to the [~~filing officer~~] county clerk a statement requesting that the voter's
601 signature be removed.
- 602 (b) A statement described in Subsection (10)(a) shall comply with the requirements
603 described in Subsection 20A-1-1003(2).
- 604 (c) The [~~filing officer~~] county clerk shall use the procedures described in Subsection
605 20A-1-1003(3) to determine whether to remove an individual's signature from a
606 nomination petition after receiving a timely, valid statement requesting removal of

607 the signature.

608 Section 9. Section **20A-9-406** is amended to read:

609 **20A-9-406 . Qualified political party -- Requirements and exemptions.**

610 The following provisions apply to a qualified political party:

- 611 (1) the qualified political party shall, no later than 5 p.m. on the first Monday of October of
612 each odd-numbered year, certify to the lieutenant governor the identity of one or more
613 registered political parties whose members may vote for the qualified political party's
614 candidates and whether unaffiliated voters may vote for the qualified political party's
615 candidates;
- 616 (2) the following provisions do not apply to a nomination for the qualified political party:
- 617 (a) Subsections 20A-9-403(1) through (3)(b) and Subsections (3)(d)(ii) through [~~(4)(a)~~]
618 (9)(a);
- 619 (b) Subsection [~~20A-9-403(5)(e)~~] 20A-9-403(10)(c); and
- 620 (c) Section 20A-9-405;
- 621 (3) an individual may only seek the nomination of the qualified political party by using a
622 method described in Section 20A-9-407, Section 20A-9-408, or both;
- 623 (4) the qualified political party shall comply with the provisions of Sections 20A-9-407,
624 20A-9-408, and 20A-9-409;
- 625 (5) notwithstanding Subsection 20A-6-301(1)(a), (1)(e), or (2)(a), each election officer shall
626 ensure that a ballot described in Section 20A-6-301 includes each individual nominated
627 by a qualified political party:
- 628 (a) under the qualified political party's name, if any; or
- 629 (b) under the title of the qualified registered political party as designated by the qualified
630 political party in the certification described in Subsection (1), or, if none is
631 designated, then under some suitable title;
- 632 (6) notwithstanding Subsection 20A-6-302(1)(a), each election officer shall ensure, for
633 ballots in regular general elections, that each candidate who is nominated by the
634 qualified political party is listed by party;
- 635 (7) notwithstanding Subsection 20A-6-304(1)(e), each election officer shall ensure that the
636 party designation of each candidate who is nominated by the qualified political party is
637 displayed adjacent to the candidate's name on a mechanical ballot;
- 638 (8) "candidates for elective office," defined in Subsection 20A-9-101(1)(a), also includes an
639 individual who files a declaration of candidacy under Section 20A-9-407 or 20A-9-408
640 to run in a regular general election for a federal office, constitutional office, multicounty

- 641 office, or county office;
- 642 (9) an individual who is nominated by, or seeking the nomination of, the qualified political
643 party is not required to comply with Subsection 20A-9-201(1)(c);
- 644 (10) notwithstanding [~~Subsection 20A-9-403(3)~~] Subsections 20A-9-403(3) through (8), the
645 qualified political party is entitled to have each of the qualified political party's
646 candidates for elective office appear on the primary ballot of the qualified political party
647 with an indication that each candidate is a candidate for the qualified political party;
- 648 (11) notwithstanding Subsection [~~20A-9-403(4)(a)~~] 20A-9-403(9)(a), the lieutenant
649 governor shall include on the list provided by the lieutenant governor to the county
650 clerks:
- 651 (a) the names of all candidates of the qualified political party for federal, constitutional,
652 multicounty, and county offices; and
- 653 (b) the names of unopposed candidates for elective office who have been nominated by
654 the qualified political party and instruct the county clerks to exclude such candidates
655 from the primary-election ballot;
- 656 (12) notwithstanding Subsection [~~20A-9-403(5)(e)~~] 20A-9-403(10)(c), a candidate who is
657 unopposed for an elective office in the regular primary election of the qualified political
658 party is nominated by the party for that office without appearing on the primary ballot;
659 and
- 660 (13) notwithstanding the provisions of Subsections 20A-9-403(1) and (2) and Section
661 20A-9-405, the qualified political party is entitled to have the names of [~~its~~] the qualified
662 political party's candidates for elective office featured with party affiliation on the ballot
663 at a regular general election.

664 Section 10. Section **20A-9-408** is amended to read:

665 **20A-9-408 . Signature-gathering process to seek the nomination of a qualified**
666 **political party -- Removal of signature.**

- 667 (1) This section describes the requirements for a member of a qualified political party who
668 is seeking the nomination of the qualified political party for an elective office through
669 the signature-gathering process described in this section.
- 670 (2) Notwithstanding Subsection 20A-9-201(7)(a), the form of the declaration of candidacy
671 for a member of a qualified political party who is nominated by, or who is seeking the
672 nomination of, the qualified political party under this section shall be substantially as
673 described in Section 20A-9-408.5.
- 674 (3) Notwithstanding Subsection 20A-9-202(1)(a), and except as provided in Subsection

675 20A-9-202(4), a member of a qualified political party who, under this section, is seeking
676 the nomination of the qualified political party for an elective office that is to be filled at
677 the next general election shall:

678 (a) except to the extent otherwise provided in Subsection (13)(a), during the applicable
679 declaration of candidacy filing period described in Section 20A-9-201.5, and before
680 gathering signatures under this section, file with the filing officer on a form approved
681 by the lieutenant governor a notice of intent to gather signatures for candidacy that
682 includes:

683 (i) the name of the member who will attempt to become a candidate for a [~~registered~~]
684 qualified political party under this section;

685 (ii) the name of the [~~registered~~] qualified political party for which the member is
686 seeking nomination;

687 (iii) the office for which the member is seeking to become a candidate;

688 (iv) the address and telephone number of the member; and

689 (v) other information required by the lieutenant governor;

690 (b) except as provided in Subsection 20A-9-202(1)(c), file a declaration of candidacy, in
691 person, with the filing officer during the applicable declaration of candidacy filing
692 period described in Section 20A-9-201.5; and

693 (c) pay the filing fee.

694 (4) Notwithstanding Subsection 20A-9-202(2)(a), a member of a qualified political party
695 who, under this section, is seeking the nomination of the qualified political party for the
696 office of district attorney within a multicounty prosecution district that is to be filled at
697 the next general election shall:

698 (a) during the applicable declaration of candidacy filing period described in Section
699 20A-9-201.5, and before gathering signatures under this section, file with the filing
700 officer on a form approved by the lieutenant governor a notice of intent to gather
701 signatures for candidacy that includes:

702 (i) the name of the member who will attempt to become a candidate for a registered
703 political party under this section;

704 (ii) the name of the registered political party for which the member is seeking
705 nomination;

706 (iii) the office for which the member is seeking to become a candidate;

707 (iv) the address and telephone number of the member; and

708 (v) other information required by the lieutenant governor;

- 709 (b) except as provided in Subsection 20A-9-202(1)(c), file a declaration of candidacy, in
710 person, with the filing officer during the applicable declaration of candidacy filing
711 period described in Section 20A-9-201.5; and
- 712 (c) pay the filing fee.
- 713 (5) Notwithstanding Subsection 20A-9-202(3)(a)(iii), a lieutenant governor candidate who
714 files as the joint-ticket running mate of an individual who is nominated by a qualified
715 political party, under this section, for the office of governor shall, during the applicable
716 declaration of candidacy filing period described in Section 20A-9-201.5, file a
717 declaration of candidacy and submit a letter from the candidate for governor that names
718 the lieutenant governor candidate as a joint-ticket running mate.
- 719 (6) The lieutenant governor shall ensure that the certification described in Subsection
720 20A-9-701(1) also includes the name of each candidate nominated by a qualified
721 political party under this section.
- 722 (7) Notwithstanding Subsection 20A-9-701(2), the ballot shall, for each candidate who is
723 nominated by a qualified political party under this section, designate the qualified
724 political party that nominated the candidate.
- 725 (8) A member of a qualified political party may seek the nomination of the qualified
726 political party for an elective office by:
- 727 (a) complying with the requirements described in this section; and
- 728 (b) collecting signatures, on a form approved by the lieutenant governor that complies
729 with Subsection 20A-9-405(3), during the period beginning on the day on which the
730 member files a notice of intent to gather signatures and ending at the applicable
731 deadline described in Subsection (12), in the following amounts:
- 732 (i) for a statewide race, 28,000 signatures of registered voters in the state who are
733 permitted by the qualified political party to vote for the qualified political party's
734 candidates in a primary election;
- 735 (ii) except as provided in Subsection (13)(b), for a congressional district race, 7,000
736 signatures of registered voters who are residents of the congressional district and
737 are permitted by the qualified political party to vote for the qualified political
738 party's candidates in a primary election;
- 739 (iii) for a state Senate district race, 2,000 signatures of registered voters who are
740 residents of the state Senate district and are permitted by the qualified political
741 party to vote for the qualified political party's candidates in a primary election;
- 742 (iv) for a state House district race, 1,000 signatures of registered voters who are

- 743 residents of the state House district and are permitted by the qualified political
 744 party to vote for the qualified political party's candidates in a primary election;
- 745 (v) for a State Board of Education race, the lesser of:
- 746 (A) 2,000 signatures of registered voters who are residents of the State Board of
 747 Education district and are permitted by the qualified political party to vote for
 748 the qualified political party's candidates in a primary election; or
- 749 (B) 3% of the registered voters of the qualified political party who are residents of
 750 the applicable State Board of Education district; and
- 751 (vi) for a county office race, signatures of 3% of the registered voters who are
 752 residents of the area permitted to vote for the county office and are permitted by
 753 the qualified political party to vote for the qualified political party's candidates in
 754 a primary election.
- 755 (9)(a) This Subsection (9) applies only to the manual candidate qualification process.
- 756 (b) In order for a member of the qualified political party to qualify as a candidate for the
 757 qualified political party's nomination for an elective office under this section, using
 758 the manual candidate qualification process, the member shall:
- 759 (i) collect the signatures on a form approved by the lieutenant governor, using the
 760 same circulation and verification requirements described in Sections 20A-7-105
 761 and 20A-7-204; and
- 762 (ii) in accordance with Section 20A-9-408.3, submit the signatures to the [~~election~~
 763 ~~officer~~] county clerk of the petition signers' residence before the applicable
 764 deadline described in Subsection (12).
- 765 (c) Upon timely receipt of the signatures described in Subsections (8) and (9)(b), and in
 766 accordance with Section 20A-9-408.3, the [~~election officer~~] county clerk shall, no
 767 later than the earlier of 14 calendar days after the day on which the [~~election officer~~]
 768 county clerk receives the signatures, or [~~one day~~] seven calendar days before the day
 769 on which the qualified political party holds the convention to select a nominee for the
 770 elective office to which the signature packets relate:
- 771 (i) check the name of each individual who completes the verification for a signature
 772 packet to determine whether each individual is at least 18 years old;
- 773 (ii) submit the name of each individual described in Subsection (9)(c)(i) who is not at
 774 least 18 years old to the attorney general and the county attorney;
- 775 (iii) [~~with the assistance of the county clerk as applicable~~] except as provided in
 776 Subsection (9)(d), determine whether each signer is a registered voter who is

- 777 qualified to sign the petition, using the same method, described in Section
 778 20A-1-1002, used to verify a signature on a petition; and
- 779 (iv) except as provided in Subsection (9)(e), certify whether each name is that of a
 780 registered voter who is qualified to sign the signature packet.
- 781 (d)(i) In reviewing a candidate signature packet, the county clerk shall count only an
 782 individual who signed with a holographic signature:
- 783 (A) who is a registered voter residing within the county clerk's county and the
 784 political division that the candidate seeks to represent; and
- 785 (B) who did not sign any other petition for that office.
- 786 (ii) If, in verifying signatures under Section 20A-1-1002, a county clerk determines
 787 that a registered voter who signed a petition is not a resident of the county clerk's
 788 county, the county clerk:
- 789 (A) shall declare the signature invalid under Subsection 20A-1-1002(3); and
 790 (B) may not certify the signature.
- 791 (e) In an election for federal office, constitutional office, or multicounty office, the
 792 county clerk shall, instead of taking the action described in Subsection (9)(c)(iv):
- 793 (i) count the number of valid petition signatures submitted by the candidate; and
 794 (ii) no later than seven calendar days before the day of the convention described in
 795 Subsection (11)(c), certify the number of valid signatures to the lieutenant
 796 governor.
- 797 (f) The lieutenant governor shall, upon receiving the certification described in
 798 Subsection (9)(e)(ii) from the county clerk of each county where the candidate
 799 submits petition signatures for verification:
- 800 (i) add together the total number of signatures declared valid by each county clerk;
 801 and
- 802 (ii) if the aggregate number of valid signatures is equal to or more than the total
 803 number of signatures required for the candidate to qualify for placement on the
 804 regular primary ballot, certify the signatures no later than the day before the day
 805 of the convention described in Subsection (11)(c).
- 806 [(d)] (g)(i) A registered voter who physically signs a form under Subsections (8) and
 807 (9)(b) may have the voter's signature removed from the form by, no later than 5
 808 p.m. three business days after the day on which the member submits the signature
 809 form to the [election-officer] county clerk, submitting to the [election-officer]
 810 county clerk a statement requesting that the voter's signature be removed.

- 811 (ii) A statement described in Subsection ~~[(9)(d)(i)]~~ (9)(g)(i) shall comply with the
 812 requirements described in Subsection 20A-1-1003(2).
- 813 (iii) ~~[With the assistance of the county clerk as applicable, the election officer]~~ The
 814 county clerk shall use the procedures described in Subsection 20A-1-1003(3) to
 815 determine whether to remove an individual's signature after receiving a timely,
 816 valid statement requesting removal of the signature.
- 817 ~~[(e)]~~ (h)(i) ~~[An election officer]~~ A county clerk shall, in accordance with this
 818 Subsection ~~[(9)(e)]~~ (9)(h) and rules made under Section 20A-3a-106, conduct
 819 regular audits of signature comparisons made between signatures gathered under
 820 this section and voter signatures maintained by the ~~[election officer]~~ county clerk.
- 821 (ii) An individual who conducts an audit of signature comparisons under this section
 822 may not audit the individual's own work.
- 823 (iii) The ~~[election officer]~~ county clerk shall:
- 824 (A) audit 1% of all signature comparisons described in Subsection ~~[(9)(e)(i)]~~
 825 (9)(h)(i) to determine the accuracy of the comparisons made;
- 826 (B) record the individuals who conducted the audit;
- 827 (C) record the audit results;
- 828 (D) provide additional training or staff reassignments, as needed, based on the
 829 results of an audit described in Subsection ~~[(9)(e)(i)]~~ (9)(h)(i); and
- 830 (E) record any remedial action taken.
- 831 (iv) The audit results described in Subsection ~~[(9)(e)(iii)(C)]~~ (9)(h)(iii)(C) are a public
 832 record.
- 833 ~~[(f)]~~ (i) ~~[An election officer who certifies signatures under Subsection (9)(e) or~~
 834 20A-9-403(3)(d)] A county clerk who verifies signatures under Subsection (9)(c),
 835 Subsection 20A-9-403(3)(d), or Subsection 20A-9-502(5)(b) shall, after ~~[certifying~~
 836 enough signatures] declaring valid enough signatures to establish that a candidate has
 837 reached the applicable signature threshold described in ~~[Subsection (8) or~~
 838 20A-9-403(3)(a)] Subsection (8), Subsection 20A-9-403(3)(a), or Subsection
 839 20A-9-502(5)(a), as applicable, continue to ~~[certify]~~ verify signatures submitted for
 840 the candidate in excess of the number of signatures required, until the ~~[election officer]~~
 841 county clerk either:
- 842 (i) in a race for federal office, constitutional office, or multicounty office, declares
 843 valid signatures equal to 110% of the applicable signature threshold;
- 844 (ii) in a race other than a race described in Subsection (9)(i)(i), certifies signatures

- 845 equal to 110% of the applicable signature threshold; or
846 ~~[(ii)]~~ (iii) has reviewed all signatures submitted for the candidate before reaching an
847 amount equal to 110% of the applicable signature threshold.
- 848 (10)(a) This Subsection (10) applies only to the electronic candidate qualification
849 process.
- 850 (b) In order for a member of the qualified political party to qualify as a candidate for the
851 qualified political party's nomination for an elective office under this section, the
852 member shall, before the deadline described in Subsection (12), collect signatures
853 electronically:
- 854 (i) in accordance with Section 20A-21-201; and
855 (ii) using progressive screens, in a format approved by the lieutenant governor, that
856 complies with Subsection 20A-9-405(4).
- 857 (c) Upon timely receipt of the signatures described in Subsections (8) and ~~[(9)(b)]~~ (10)(b),
858 the election officer shall, no later than the earlier of 14 calendar days after the day on
859 which the election officer receives the signatures, or ~~[one day]~~ seven calendar days
860 before the day on which the qualified political party holds the convention to select a
861 nominee for the elective office to which the signature packets relate:
- 862 (i) check the name of each individual who completes the verification for a signature
863 to determine whether each individual is at least 18 years old; and
864 (ii) submit the name of each individual described in Subsection (10)(c)(i) who is not
865 at least 18 years old to the attorney general and the county attorney.
- 866 (11)(a) An individual may not gather signatures under this section until after the
867 individual files a notice of intent to gather signatures for candidacy described in this
868 section.
- 869 (b) An individual who files a notice of intent to gather signatures for candidacy,
870 described in Subsection (3)(a) or (4)(a), is, beginning on the day on which the
871 individual files the notice of intent to gather signatures for candidacy:
- 872 (i) required to comply with the reporting requirements that a candidate for office is
873 required to comply with; and
874 (ii) subject to the same enforcement provisions, and civil and criminal penalties, that
875 apply to a candidate for office in relation to the reporting requirements described
876 in Subsection (11)(b)(i).
- 877 (c) Upon timely receipt of the signatures described in Subsections (8) and (9)(b), or
878 Subsections (8) and (10)(b), the election officer shall, no later than the day before the

879 day on which the qualified political party holds the convention to select a nominee
 880 for the elective office to which the signature packets relate, notify the qualified
 881 political party and the lieutenant governor of the name of each member of the
 882 qualified political party who qualifies as a nominee of the qualified political party,
 883 under this section, for the elective office to which the convention relates.

884 (d) Upon receipt of a notice of intent to gather signatures for candidacy described in this
 885 section, the lieutenant governor shall post the notice of intent to gather signatures for
 886 candidacy on the lieutenant governor's website in the same location that the
 887 lieutenant governor posts a declaration of candidacy.

888 (12) The deadline before which a member of a qualified political party must collect and
 889 submit signatures to the election officer under this section is 5 p.m. on the last business
 890 day that is at least [~~14~~] 21 calendar days before the day on which the qualified political
 891 party's convention for the office begins.

892 (13) For the 2026 election year only, an individual who desires to gather signatures to seek
 893 the nomination of a qualified political party for the office of United States representative
 894 shall:

895 (a) in accordance with Subsection (3)(a), file a notice of intent to gather signatures
 896 during the period beginning at 8 a.m. on the first business day of January and ending
 897 at 5 p.m. on March 13, 2026; and

898 (b) during the period beginning on the day on which the individual files the notice of
 899 intent to gather signatures and ending at 5 p.m. on March 13, 2026, on a form
 900 approved by the lieutenant governor that complies with Subsection 20A-9-405(3),
 901 collect 7,000 signatures of registered voters who are residents of the state and are
 902 permitted by the qualified political party to vote for the qualified political party's
 903 candidates in a primary election.

904 Section 11. Section **20A-9-502** is amended to read:

905 **20A-9-502 . Certificate of nomination -- Contents -- Circulation -- Verification --**
 906 **Criminal penalty -- Removal of petition signature.**

907 (1) The candidate shall:

908 (a) prepare a certificate of nomination in substantially the following form:

909 "State of Utah, County of _____

910 I, _____, declare my intention of becoming an unaffiliated candidate for the
 911 political group designated as ____ for the office of _____. I do solemnly swear that I can
 912 qualify to hold that office both legally and constitutionally if selected, and that I reside at _____

913 Street, in the city of _____, county of _____, state of _____, zip code _____, phone _____, and
 914 that I am providing, or have provided, the required number of holographic signatures of
 915 registered voters required by law; that as a candidate at the next election I will not knowingly
 916 violate any election or campaign law; that, if filing via a designated agent for an office other
 917 than president of the United States, I will be out of the state of Utah during the entire candidate
 918 filing period; I will file all campaign financial disclosure reports as required by law; and I
 919 understand that failure to do so will result in my disqualification as a candidate for this office
 920 and removal of my name from the ballot.

921

922

Subscribed and sworn to before me this _____(month\day\year).

923

924

Notary Public (or other officer

925

qualified to administer oaths)";

926 (b) for each signature packet, bind signature sheets to a copy of the certificate of
 927 nomination and the circulator verification, that:

928 (i) are printed on sheets of paper 8-1/2 inches long and 11 inches wide;

929 (ii) are ruled with a horizontal line 3/4 inch from the top, with the space above that
 930 line blank for the purpose of binding;

931 (iii) contain the name of the proposed candidate and the words "Unaffiliated
 932 Candidate Certificate of Nomination Petition" printed directly below the
 933 horizontal line;

934 (iv) contain the word "Warning" printed directly under the words described in
 935 Subsection (1)(b)(iii);

936 (v) contain, to the right of the word "Warning," the following statement printed in not less than
 937 eight-point, single leaded type:

938 "It is a class A misdemeanor for anyone to knowingly sign a certificate of nomination
 939 signature sheet with any name other than the person's own name or more than once for the
 940 same candidate or if the person is not registered to vote in this state and does not intend to
 941 become registered to vote in this state before the county clerk certifies the signatures.";

- 942 (vi) contain the word "Notice" printed directly beneath the words described in
 943 Subsection (1)(b)(v);
- 944 (vii) contain, to the right of the word "Notice," the following statement printed in not
 945 less than eight-point, single leaded type:
 946 "Only a registered voter who is a resident of [insert name of county] County
 947 should sign this nomination petition.";
- 948 ~~(vi)~~ (viii) contain the following statement directly under the statement described in
 949 Subsection ~~(1)(b)(v)~~ (1)(b)(vii):
- 950 "Each signer says:
 951 I have personally signed this petition with a holographic signature;
 952 I am registered to vote in Utah or intend to become registered to vote in Utah before the
 953 county clerk certifies my signature; and
 954 My street address is written correctly after my name.";
- 955 ~~(vii)~~ (ix) contain horizontally ruled lines, 3/8 inch apart under the statement
 956 described in Subsection ~~(1)(b)(vi)~~ (1)(b)(viii); and
- 957 ~~(viii)~~ (x) be vertically divided into columns as follows:
- 958 (A) the first column shall appear at the extreme left of the sheet, be 5/8 inch wide,
 959 be headed with "For Office Use Only," and be subdivided with a light vertical
 960 line down the middle;
- 961 (B) the next column shall be ~~[2-1/2]~~ 2 inches wide, headed "Registered Voter's
 962 Printed Name (must be legible to be counted)";
- 963 (C) the next column shall be ~~[2-1/2]~~ 2 inches wide, headed "Holographic Signature
 964 of Registered Voter";
- 965 (D) the next column shall be one inch wide, headed "Birth Date or Age
 966 (Optional)";
- 967 (E) the ~~[final]~~ next column shall be 4-3/8 inches wide, headed "Street Address,
 968 City, Zip Code"; ~~[and]~~
- 969 (F) the final column shall be one inch wide, headed "County of Residence"; and
- 970 ~~(F)~~ (G) at the bottom of the sheet, contain the following statement: "Birth date or
 971 age information is not required, but it may be used to verify your identity with
 972 voter registration records. If you choose not to provide it, your signature may
 973 not be certified as a valid signature if you change your address before petition
 974 signatures are certified or if the information you provide does not match your
 975 voter registration records."; and

976 (c) bind a final page to one or more signature sheets that are bound together that contains,
 977 except as provided by Subsection (3), the following printed statement:

978 "Verification

979 State of Utah, County of ____

980 I, _____, of _____, hereby state that:

981 I am at least 18 years old;

982 All the names that appear on the signature sheets bound to this page were signed by
 983 persons who professed to be the persons whose names appear on the signature sheets, and each
 984 of them signed the person's name on the signature sheets in my presence;

985 I believe that each has printed and signed the person's name and written the person's
 986 street address correctly, and that each signer is registered to vote in Utah or will register to
 987 vote in Utah before the county clerk certifies the signatures on the signature sheet.

988 _____
 989 (Signature) (Residence Address) (Date)."[:]

990 (2) An agent designated to file a certificate of nomination under Subsection 20A-9-503

991 (2)(b) or (4)(b) may not sign the form described in Subsection (1)(a).

992 (3)(a) The candidate shall circulate the nomination petition and ensure that the person in
 993 whose presence each signature sheet is signed:

994 (i) is at least 18 years old; and

995 (ii) verifies each signature sheet by completing the verification bound to one or more
 996 signature sheets that are bound together.

997 (b) A person may not sign the circulator verification if the person signed a signature
 998 sheet bound to the verification.

999 (4)(a) It is unlawful for any person to:

1000 (i) knowingly sign a certificate of nomination signature sheet:

1001 (A) with any name other than the person's own name;

1002 (B) more than once for the same candidate; or

1003 (C) if the person is not registered to vote in this state and does not intend to
 1004 become registered to vote in this state before the county clerk certifies the
 1005 signatures; or

1006 (ii) sign the verification of a certificate of nomination signature sheet if the person:

1007 (A) has not witnessed the signing by those persons whose names appear on the
 1008 certificate of nomination signature sheet; or

1009 (B) knows that a person whose signature appears on the certificate of nomination

1010 signature sheet is not registered to vote in this state and does not intend to
 1011 become registered to vote in this state.

1012 (b) Any person violating this Subsection (4) is guilty of a class A misdemeanor.

1013 (5)(a) To qualify for placement on the general election ballot, the candidate shall, no
 1014 earlier than the start of the applicable declaration of candidacy period described in
 1015 Section 20A-9-201.5 and no later than 5 p.m. on June 15 of the year in which the
 1016 election will be held:

1017 (i) comply with Subsection 20A-9-503(1); ~~[and]~~

1018 (ii) ~~[submit each signature packet to the county clerk where the majority of the~~
 1019 ~~signatures in the packet were collected, with signatures totaling]~~ collect signatures
 1020 in an amount totaling:

1021 (A) at least 1,000 registered voters residing within the state when the nomination
 1022 is for an office to be filled by the voters of the entire state; or

1023 (B) at least 300 registered voters residing within a political division or at least 5%
 1024 of the registered voters residing within a political division, whichever is less,
 1025 when the nomination is for an office to be filled by the voters of any political
 1026 division smaller than the state~~[-]~~ ; and

1027 (iii) submit the signatures to the county clerk of the registered voter's residence.

1028 (b) A candidate has not complied with Subsection (5)(a)(ii), unless the county clerks
 1029 verify that each required signature is a valid signature of a registered voter who is
 1030 eligible to sign the signature packet and has not signed a signature packet to nominate
 1031 another candidate for the same office.

1032 (c) Except as provided in Subsection (6), the county clerk shall use the procedures
 1033 described in Section 20A-1-1002 to determine whether a signer is a registered voter
 1034 who is qualified to sign the signature packet.

1035 ~~[(e)]~~ (d) In reviewing ~~[the signature packets, the county clerk shall count and certify only~~
 1036 ~~those persons]~~ a signature packet, the county clerk shall count only an individual who
 1037 signed with a holographic signature~~[-, who]:~~

1038 (i) ~~[are registered voters within the political division that the candidate seeks to~~
 1039 ~~represent]~~ who is a registered voter residing within the county clerk's county and
 1040 the political division that the candidate seeks to represent; and

1041 (ii) who did not sign any other certificate of nomination for that office.

1042 ~~[(d)]~~ (e) ~~[The]~~ Except as provided in Subsection (7), the county clerk shall [count and-]
 1043 certify the number of registered voters who validly signed a signature packet~~[-]~~ no

1044 later than 30 calendar days after the day on which the candidate submits the signature
1045 packet.

1046 ~~[(e)]~~ (f) The candidate may supplement the signatures or amend the certificate of
1047 nomination or declaration of candidacy at any time on or before 5 p.m. on June 15 of
1048 the year in which the election will be held.

1049 ~~[(f) The county clerk shall use the procedures described in Section 20A-1-1002 to
1050 determine whether a signer is a registered voter who is qualified to sign the signature
1051 packet.]~~

1052 (6) If, in verifying signatures under Section 20A-1-1002, the county clerk determines that a
1053 registered voter who signed a signature packet is not a resident of the county clerk's
1054 county, the county clerk:

1055 (a) shall declare the signature invalid under Subsection 20A-1-1002(3); and

1056 (b) may not certify the signature.

1057 (7)(a) In an election for federal office, constitutional office, or multicounty office, the
1058 county clerk shall, instead of taking the action described in Subsection (5)(e):

1059 (i) count the number of valid nomination petition signatures submitted by the
1060 candidate; and

1061 (ii) no later than the day of the deadline described in Subsection (5)(f), certify the
1062 number of valid signatures to the lieutenant governor.

1063 (b) The lieutenant governor shall, upon receiving the certification described in
1064 Subsection (7)(a)(ii) from the county clerk of each county where the candidate
1065 submits signatures for verification:

1066 (i) add together the total number of signatures declared valid by each county clerk;
1067 and

1068 (ii) if the aggregate number of valid signatures is equal to or more than the total
1069 number of signatures required for the candidate to qualify for placement on the
1070 general election ballot, certify the signatures no later than August 1 of the year on
1071 which the election will be held.

1072 ~~[(6)]~~ (8)(a) A voter who signs a signature packet under this section may have the voter's
1073 signature removed from the signature packet by, no later than 5 p.m. three business
1074 days after the day on which the candidate submits the signature packet to the county
1075 clerk, submitting to the county clerk a statement requesting that the voter's signature
1076 be removed.

1077 (b) A statement described in Subsection ~~[(6)(a)]~~ (8)(a) shall comply with the

1078 requirements described in Subsection 20A-1-1003(2).
1079 (c) The county clerk shall use the procedures described in Subsection 20A-1-1003(3) to
1080 determine whether to remove an individual's signature from a signature packet after
1081 receiving a timely, valid statement requesting removal of the signature.

1082 Section 12. Section **20A-9-701** is amended to read:

1083 **20A-9-701 . Certification of party candidates to county clerks -- Display on ballot.**

1084 (1) No later than August 31 of each regular general election year, the lieutenant governor
1085 shall certify to each county clerk, for offices to be voted upon at the regular general
1086 election in that county clerk's county:

1087 (a) the names of each candidate nominated under Subsection 20A-9-202(4) or
1088 Subsection [~~20A-9-403(5)~~] 20A-9-403(10); and

1089 (b) the names of the candidates for president and vice president that are certified by the
1090 registered political party as the party's nominees.

1091 (2) The names shall be certified by the lieutenant governor and shall be displayed on the
1092 ballot as they are provided on the candidate's declaration of candidacy. No other names
1093 may appear on the ballot as affiliated with, endorsed by, or nominated by any other
1094 registered political party, political party, or other political group.

1095 Section 13. **Effective Date.**

1096 This bill takes effect on January 1, 2027.