

RCW 29A.04.013

Canvassing.

"Canvassing" means the process of examining ballots or groups of ballots, subtotals, and cumulative totals in order to determine the official returns of a primary, special, or general election and includes the tabulation of any votes that were not previously tabulated.

[2013 c 11 § 2; 2011 c 10 § 2; 2003 c 111 § 103; 1990 c 59 § 3. Formerly RCW 29.01.008.]

NOTES:

Notice to registered poll voters—Elections by mail—2011 c 10: See note following RCW 29A.04.008.

Intent—1990 c 59: "By this act the legislature intends to unify and simplify the laws and procedures governing filing for elective office, ballot layout, ballot format, voting equipment, and canvassing." [1990 c 59 § 1.]

Effective date—1990 c 59: "Sections 1 through 6, 8 through 96, and 98 through 112 of this act shall take effect July 1, 1992." [1990 c 59 § 113.]

RCW 29A.04.330

City, town, and district general and special elections—Exceptions.

(1) All city, town, and district general elections shall be held throughout the state of Washington on the first Tuesday following the first Monday in November in the odd-numbered years.

This section shall not apply to:

- (a) Elections for the recall of any elective public officer;
- (b) Public utility districts, conservation districts, or district elections at which the ownership of property within those districts is a prerequisite to voting, all of which elections shall be held at the times prescribed in the laws specifically applicable thereto;
- (c) Consolidation proposals as provided for in RCW 28A.315.235 and nonhigh capital fund aid proposals as provided for in chapter 28A.540 RCW; and
- (d) Special flood control districts consisting of three or more counties.

(2) The county auditor, as ex officio supervisor of elections, upon request in the form of a resolution of the governing body of a city, town, or district, presented to the auditor prior to the proposed election date, shall call a special election in such city, town, or district, and for the purpose of such special election he or she may combine, unite, or divide precincts. Such a special election shall be held on one of the following dates as decided by the governing body:

- (a) The second Tuesday in February;
- (b) The fourth Tuesday in April;
- (c) The day of the primary election as specified by RCW 29A.04.311; or
- (d) The first Tuesday after the first Monday in November.

(3) A resolution calling for a special election on a date set forth in subsection (2)(a) and (b) of this section must be presented to the county auditor at least sixty days prior to the election date. A resolution calling for a special election on a date set forth in subsection (2)(c) of this section must be presented to the county auditor no later than the Friday immediately before the first day of regular candidate filing. A resolution calling for a special election on a date set forth in subsection (2)(d) of this section must be presented to the county auditor no later than the day of the primary.

(4) In addition to subsection (2)(a) through (d) of this section, a special election to validate an excess levy or bond issue may be called at any time to meet the needs resulting from fire, flood, earthquake, or other act of God, except that no special election may be held between the first day for candidates to file for public office and the last day to certify the returns of the general election other than as provided in subsection (2)(c) and (d) of this section. Such special election shall be conducted and notice thereof given in the manner provided by law.

(5) This section shall supersede the provisions of any and all other statutes, whether general or special in nature, having different dates for such city, town, and district elections, the purpose of this section being to establish mandatory dates for holding elections.

[2015 c 146 § 2; 2013 c 11 § 9; 2011 c 349 § 4. Prior: 2009 c 413 § 4; (2009 c 413 § 3 expired July 1, 2011); 2009 c 144 § 3; 2006 c 344 § 3; 2004 c 266 § 6; 2003 c 111 § 145; 2002 c 43 § 2; 1994 c 142 § 2; 1992 c 37 § 2; 1990 c 33 § 562; 1989 c 4 § 10 (Initiative Measure No. 99); 1986 c 167 § 6; 1980 c 3 § 2; 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 111 § 2; 1965 c 123 § 3; 1965 c 9 § 29.13.020; prior: 1963 c 200 § 1; 1955 c 55 § 1; 1951 c 101 § 1; 1949 c 161 § 1; 1927 c 182 § 1; 1923 c 53 § 2; 1921 c 61 § 2; Rem. Supp. 1949 § 5144. Formerly RCW 29.13.020.]

NOTES:

Effective date—2011 c 349: See note following RCW 29A.04.255.

Effective date—2009 c 413 §§ 2 and 4: See note following RCW 29A.04.321.

Expiration date—2009 c 413 §§ 1 and 3: See note following RCW 29A.04.321.

Effective date—2006 c 344 §§ 1-16 and 18-40: See note following RCW 29A.04.311.

Effective date—2004 c 266: See note following RCW 29A.04.575.

Intent—2002 c 43: "The legislature finds that there are conflicting interpretations as to the intent of the legislature in the enactment of chapter 305, Laws of 1999. The purpose of this act is to make statutory changes that further clarify this intent.

It is the intent of the legislature that elections of conservation district supervisors continue to be conducted under procedures in the conservation district statutes, chapter 89.08 RCW, and that such elections not be conducted under the general election laws contained in Title 29 RCW. Further, it is the intent of the legislature that there be no change made with regard to applicability of the public disclosure act, *chapter 42.17 RCW, to conservation district supervisors from those that existed before the enactment of chapter 305, Laws of 1999." [2002 c 43 § 1.]

***Reviser's note:** Provisions in chapter 42.17 RCW relating to public disclosure are recodified in chapter 42.56 RCW by 2005 c 274.

Effective date—2002 c 43: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [March 14, 2002]." [2002 c 43 § 6.]

Effective date—1994 c 142: "This act shall take effect January 1, 1995." [1994 c 142 § 3.]

Purpose—Statutory references—Severability—1990 c 33: See RCW 28A.900.100 through 28A.900.102.

Severability—1986 c 167: See note following RCW 29A.16.040.

Severability—1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 111: "If any provision of this 1976 amendatory act, or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act, or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 111 § 3.]

RCW 29A.32.210

Authorization—Contents—Format. *(Effective until July 1, 2021.)*

At least ninety days before any primary or general election, or at least forty days before any special election held under RCW 29A.04.321 or 29A.04.330, the legislative authority of any county or first-class or code city may adopt an ordinance authorizing the publication and distribution of a local voters' pamphlet. The pamphlet shall provide information on all measures within that jurisdiction and may, if specified in the ordinance, include information on candidates within that jurisdiction. If both a county and a first-class or code city within that county authorize a local voters' pamphlet for the same election, the pamphlet shall be produced jointly by the county and the first-class or code city. If no agreement can be reached between the county and first-class or code city, the county and first-class or code city may each produce a pamphlet. Any ordinance adopted authorizing a local voters' pamphlet may be for a specific primary, special election, or general election or for any future primaries or elections. The format of any local voters' pamphlet shall, whenever applicable, comply with the provisions of this chapter regarding the publication of the state candidates' and voters' pamphlets.

[2013 c 11 § 38; 2003 c 111 § 813; 1984 c 106 § 3. Formerly RCW 29.81A.010.]

RCW 29A.32.210

Duty to print and distribute—Contents—Format. *(Effective July 1, 2021.)*

Before any primary or general election, or any special election held under RCW 29A.04.321 or 29A.04.330, each county auditor shall print and distribute a local voters' pamphlet. The pamphlet shall provide information on all measures and candidates within that jurisdiction. The format of any local voters' pamphlet shall, whenever applicable, comply with the provisions of this chapter regarding the publication of the state candidates' and voters' pamphlets.

[2020 c 337 § 6; 2013 c 11 § 38; 2003 c 111 § 813; 1984 c 106 § 3. Formerly RCW 29.81A.010.]

NOTES:

Effective date—2020 c 337: See note following RCW 29A.04.410.

RCW 29A.32.220

Notice of production—Local governments' decision to participate.

(1) Not later than ninety days before the publication and distribution of a local voters' pamphlet by a county, the county auditor shall notify each city, town, or special taxing district located wholly within that county that a pamphlet will be produced.

(2) If a voters' pamphlet is published by the county for a primary or general election, the pamphlet shall be published for the elective offices and ballot measures of the county and for the elective offices and ballot measures of each unit of local government located entirely within the county which will appear on the ballot at that primary or election. However, the offices and measures of a first-class or code city shall not be included in the pamphlet if the city publishes and distributes its own voters' pamphlet for the primary or election for its offices and measures. The offices and measures of any other town or city are not required to appear in the county's pamphlet if the town or city is obligated by ordinance or charter to publish and distribute a voters' pamphlet for the primary or election for its offices and measures and it does so.

If the required appearance in a county's voters' pamphlet of the offices or measures of a unit of local government would create undue financial hardship for the unit of government, the legislative authority of the unit may petition the legislative authority of the county to waive this requirement. The legislative authority of the county may provide such a waiver if it does so not later than sixty days before the publication of the pamphlet and it finds that the requirement would create such hardship.

(3) If a city, town, or district is located within more than one county, the respective county auditors may enter into an interlocal agreement to permit the distribution of each county's local voters' pamphlet into those parts of the city, town, or district located outside of that county.

(4) If a first-class or code city authorizes the production and distribution of a local voters' pamphlet, the city clerk of that city shall notify any special taxing district located wholly within that city that a pamphlet will be produced. Notification shall be provided in the manner required or provided for in subsection (1) of this section.

(5) A unit of local government located within a county and the county may enter into an interlocal agreement for the publication of a voters' pamphlet for offices or measures not required by subsection (2) of this section to appear in a county's pamphlet.

[2003 c 111 § 814; 1994 c 191 § 1; 1984 c 106 § 4. Formerly RCW 29.81A.020.]

RCW 29A.32.230

Administrative rules.

The county auditor or, if applicable, the city clerk of a first-class or code city shall, in consultation with the participating jurisdictions, adopt and publish administrative rules necessary to facilitate the provisions of any ordinance authorizing production of a local voters' pamphlet. Any amendment to such a rule shall also be adopted and published. Copies of the rules shall identify the date they were adopted or last amended and shall be made available to any person upon request. One copy of the rules adopted by a county auditor and one copy of any amended rules shall be submitted to the county legislative authority. One copy of the rules adopted by a city clerk and one copy of any amended rules shall be submitted to the city legislative authority. These rules shall include but not be limited to the following:

- (1) Deadlines for decisions by cities, towns, or special taxing districts on being included in the pamphlet;
- (2) Limits on the length and deadlines for submission of arguments for and against each measure;
- (3) The basis for rejection of any explanatory or candidates' statement or argument deemed to be libelous or otherwise inappropriate. Any statements by a candidate shall be limited to those about the candidate himself or herself;
- (4) Limits on the length and deadlines for submission of candidates' statements;
- (5) An appeal process in the case of the rejection of any statement or argument.

[2003 c 111 § 815. Prior: 1984 c 106 § 5. Formerly RCW 29.81A.030.]

RCW 29A.32.241

Contents.

(1) The local voters' pamphlet shall include but not be limited to the following:

(a) Appearing on the cover, the words "official local voters' pamphlet," the name of the jurisdiction producing the pamphlet, and the date of the election or primary;

(b) A list of jurisdictions that have measures or candidates in the pamphlet;

(c) Information on how a person may register to vote and obtain a ballot;

(d) The text of each measure accompanied by an explanatory statement prepared by the prosecuting attorney for any county measure or by the attorney for the jurisdiction submitting the measure if other than a county measure. All explanatory statements for city, town, or district measures not approved by the attorney for the jurisdiction submitting the measure shall be reviewed and approved by the county prosecuting attorney or city attorney, when applicable, before inclusion in the pamphlet;

(e) The arguments for and against each measure submitted by committees selected pursuant to RCW 29A.32.280;

(f) A list of all student engagement hubs in the county as designated under RCW 29A.40.180;
and

(g) For partisan primary elections, information on how to vote the applicable ballot format and an explanation that minor political party candidates and independent candidates will appear only on the general election ballot.

(2) The county auditor's name may not appear in the local voters' pamphlet in his or her official capacity if the county auditor is a candidate for office during the same year. His or her name may only be included as part of the information normally included for candidates.

[2020 c 208 § 12; 2016 c 83 § 2; 2011 c 10 § 29; 2004 c 271 § 123.]

NOTES:

Short title—Findings—2020 c 208: See notes following RCW 29A.08.210.

Notice to registered poll voters—Elections by mail—2011 c 10: See note following RCW 29A.04.008.

RCW 29A.32.250

Candidates, when included.

If the legislative authority of a county or first-class or code city provides for the inclusion of candidates in the local voters' pamphlet, the pamphlet shall include the statements from candidates and may also include those candidates' photographs.

[2003 c 111 § 817. Prior: 1984 c 106 § 7. Formerly RCW 29.81A.050.]

RCW 29A.32.260

Mailing.

As soon as practicable before the primary, special election, or general election, the county auditor, or if applicable, the city clerk of a first-class or code city, as appropriate, shall mail the local voters' pamphlet to every residence in each jurisdiction that has included information in the pamphlet. The county auditor or city clerk, as appropriate, may choose to mail the pamphlet to each registered voter in each jurisdiction that has included information in the pamphlet, if in his or her judgment, a more economical and effective distribution of the pamphlet would result.

[2011 c 10 § 30; 2003 c 111 § 818. Prior: 1984 c 106 § 8. Formerly RCW 29.81A.060.]

NOTES:

Notice to registered poll voters—Elections by mail—2011 c 10: See note following RCW 29A.04.008.

RCW 29A.32.270

Cost.

The cost of a local voters' pamphlet shall be considered an election cost to those local jurisdictions included in the pamphlet and shall be prorated in the manner provided in RCW 29A.04.410.

[2003 c 111 § 819. Prior: 1984 c 106 § 9. Formerly RCW 29.81A.070.]

RCW 29A.32.280

Arguments advocating approval or disapproval—Preparation by committees.

For each measure from a unit of local government that is included in a local voters' pamphlet, the legislative authority of that jurisdiction shall, not later than the resolution deadline, formally appoint a committee to prepare arguments advocating voters' approval of the measure and shall formally appoint a committee to prepare arguments advocating voters' rejection of the measure. The authority shall appoint persons known to favor the measure to serve on the committee advocating approval and shall, whenever possible, appoint persons known to oppose the measure to serve on the committee advocating rejection. Each committee shall have not more than three members, however, a committee may seek the advice of any person or persons. If the legislative authority of a unit of local government fails to make such appointments by the prescribed deadline, the county auditor shall whenever possible make the appointments.

[2015 c 146 § 3; 2003 c 111 § 820. Prior: 1994 c 191 § 2; 1984 c 106 § 10. Formerly RCW 29.81A.080.]

RCW 29A.52.355

Notice of election—Prior to mail-in registration deadline.

(1) Notice for any state, county, district, or municipal primary or election, whether special or general, must be given by the county auditor between five and fifteen days prior to the deadline for mail-in registrations. The notice must be published in one or more newspapers of general circulation and must contain, at a minimum, the last date to register online or through the mail, the last date to transfer or update an existing registration, the last date to register in person for first-time voters, information on where a person can register, the type of election, the date of the election, how a voter can obtain a ballot, a list of all jurisdictions involved in the election, including positions and short titles for ballot measures appearing on the ballot, and the times and dates of any public meetings associated with the election. The notice shall also include where additional information regarding the election may be obtained. The notice of a primary held in an even-numbered year must indicate that the office of precinct committee officer is on the ballot. This is the only notice required for a state, county, district, or municipal primary or special or general election.

(2) If the county or city chooses to mail a local voters' pamphlet as described in RCW 29A.32.210 to each residence, the notice required in this section need only include the last date to register online or through the mail, the last date to transfer or update an existing registration, the last date to register in person for first-time voters, information on where a person can register, and the times and dates of any public meetings associated with the election.

[2013 c 11 § 53; 2011 c 10 § 45.]

NOTES:

Notice to registered poll voters—Elections by mail—2011 c 10: See note following RCW 29A.04.008.

RCW 35.02.020

Petition for incorporation—Signatures—Filing deadline.

A petition for incorporation must be signed by registered voters resident within the limits of the proposed city or town equal in number to at least ten percent of the number of voters residing within the proposed city or town and filed with the auditor of the county in which all, or the largest portion of, the proposed city or town is located. The petition must be filed with the auditor by no later than one hundred eighty days after the date the public meeting on the proposed incorporation was held under RCW 35.02.015, or the next regular business day following the one hundred eightieth day if the one hundred eightieth day is not a regular business day.

[1994 c 216 § 4; 1986 c 234 § 3; 1965 c 7 § 35.02.020. Prior: 1957 c 173 § 2; prior: 1953 c 219 § 1; 1890 p 131 § 2, part; 1888 p 221 §§ 1, 2, part; 1877 p 173 §§ 1, 2, part; 1871 p 51 § 1, part; RRS § 8884, part.]

NOTES:

Effective date—1994 c 216: See note following RCW 35.02.015.

RCW 35.02.155

Effect of proposed annexation on petition.

For a period of ninety days after a petition proposing the incorporation of a city or town is filed with the county auditor, a petition or resolution proposing the annexation of any portion of the territory included in the incorporation proposal may be filed or adopted and the proposed annexation may continue following the applicable statutory procedures. Territory that ultimately is annexed, as a result of the filing of such an annexation petition or adoption of such an annexation resolution during this ninety-day period, shall be withdrawn from the incorporation proposal.

A proposed annexation of a portion of the territory included within the proposed incorporation, that is initiated by the filing of an annexation petition or adoption of an annexation resolution after this ninety-day period, shall be held in abeyance and may not occur unless: (1) The boundary review board modifies the boundaries of the proposed incorporation to remove the territory from the proposed incorporation; (2) the boundary review board rejects the proposed incorporation and the proposed city or town has a population of less than seven thousand five hundred; or (3) voters defeat the ballot proposition authorizing the proposed incorporation.

[1994 c 216 § 5.]

NOTES:

Effective date—1994 c 216: See note following RCW 35.02.015.

RCW 35.13.176

Territory subject to annexation proposal—When annexation by another city or incorporation allowed.

After a petition proposing an annexation by a city or town is filed with the city or town or the governing body of the city or town, or after a resolution proposing an annexation by a city or town has been adopted by the city or town governing body, no territory included in the proposed annexation may be annexed by another city or town or incorporated into a city or town unless: (1) The boundary review board modifies the boundaries of the proposed annexation and removes the territory; (2) the boundary review board or review board created under RCW 35.13.171 rejects the proposed annexation; or (3) the city or town governing body rejects the proposed annexation or voters defeat the ballot proposition authorizing the annexation.

[1994 c 216 § 7.]

NOTES:

Effective date—1994 c 216: See note following RCW 35.02.015.