

Candidate Guidelines

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INTRODUCTION

The *Candidate Guidelines* are furnished as a source of general information about the basic requirements of, and deadlines for, candidacy for municipal office in the city of Fort Collins at a regular municipal election. Regular municipal elections are held the first Tuesday after the first Monday in April in odd-numbered years. In addition, general information is provided regarding administration of the election and basic information about the organization of the City Council.

These *Guidelines* are not intended to be comprehensive in scope or depth. If you have questions regarding the interpretation of applicable laws and regulations for your particular situation, you may wish to consult with a private attorney who can provide you with that interpretation. If there is any inconsistency between these guidelines and the applicable provisions of the City Code, City Charter, or state law, the provisions of the Code, Charter, or state law take precedence.

Throughout these *Guidelines* there will be references to additional materials. Those additional materials are provided online and available in the City Clerk's Office upon request.

ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

All regular and special municipal elections are administered by the City Clerk's Office under the provisions of the City Code, the City Charter, and Colorado law.

All information regarding the conduct of the election and requirements of a candidate for municipal office should be obtained from the City Clerk's Office. Other entities, such as Larimer County and the Colorado Secretary of State, are not familiar with the requirements of the City Code and Charter. The City Clerk's Office will assist you through the election process as much as possible. However, the City Clerk's Office cannot provide legal advice. You should consult with your own attorney about the application of the law to your individual situation.

The City Clerk's Office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, with the exception of legal holidays.

OFFICERS TO BE ELECTED

At a regular municipal election, City voters elect Councilmembers in three Council districts. In addition, voters citywide directly elect a Mayor.

THE MAIL BALLOT ELECTION

All municipal elections are conducted by mail ballot. A ballot will be mailed to each eligible City voter approximately **two weeks** before the election. The mail ballot package will contain a ballot listing the candidates for which the voter is entitled to vote and ballot questions (if any), instructions on how to vote the ballot, and a return envelope with an affidavit that must be completed by the voter (as required by the City Code).

In a mail ballot election, voters may cast the ballot received in the mail in any of the following manners:

- **Return the ballot by mail.** (No postage is required - the City pays return postage.)
- **Drop the ballot off** during normal working hours at the City Clerk's Office, 300 LaPorte Avenue, or at the following locations:
 - City Hall Drive-up Dropbox, 300 LaPorte Avenue, (west end of south parking lot, accessible 24 hours a day until 7 p.m. on election day)
 - Fort Collins Police Services, 2221 South Timberline Road (ballot drop located in building entryway is accessible 24 hours a day until 7:00 p.m. on election day)
 - Larimer County Citizen Information Center, 200 West Oak (accessible during normal business hours)
 - Northside Atzlan Community Center, 112 East Willow Street, inside east entrance (accessible during normal Center hours)
 - Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Drive, inside main door (accessible during normal Center hours)
 - South Transit Center (accessible 24 hours a day until 7:00 p.m. on election day)

Candidates, members of the public, and news media are welcome to observe the mail ballot process at any time. It is recommended that you call 970.221.6515 in advance to determine whether ballots are being processed at the time you plan to visit so that you can have a complete tour.

GENERAL

An individual is eligible to be a candidate for municipal office if, at the time of election, he or she:

- Is a citizen of the United States;
- Is at least 21 years of age;
- Has been a registered elector within the city for at least one year immediately preceding the election, and
- In the case of a District Councilmember, has continuously resided in the District from which he or she is to be elected since the date of accepting any nomination for election under Article VIII, Section 3 of the City Charter. (The acceptance of nomination is a part of the nomination petition process.)

During a term of office, no member of the Council shall be an employee of the city or hold any other elective public office. No person shall be elected or appointed to any city office, position or employment for which the compensation was increased or fixed by the Council while such person was a member thereof until after expiration of one (1) year from the date when such person ceased to be a member of the Council. [Charter Article II, Section 2(c)]

No person who has been convicted of a felony is eligible to be a candidate for or hold the office of Councilmember.

All municipal elections are non-partisan. Staff will not answer questions regarding a candidate's party affiliation. Such questions will be referred to the candidate.

OFFICE OF MAYOR

Candidates for the office of Mayor are nominated by registered electors in the city at-large and are voted upon citywide.

DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICE

Candidates for District office must have continuously resided within the Council District they seek to represent since the date of accepting nomination, and are nominated and elected by registered voters in the candidate's District. (The acceptance of nomination is a part of the nomination petition process.)

NOMINATION PETITIONS

Each candidate for municipal office must circulate and submit a nomination petition containing 25 sufficient signatures.

A [nomination petition](#) is provided online and is available in the City Clerk's Office.

SIGNATURE REQUIREMENTS

Each District candidate's petition must be signed by at least **25 registered electors who reside within the District**.

Candidates for Mayor must each obtain signatures of **25 registered electors who live within the city**. The candidate must sign the *Verified Acceptance of Nomination* at the end of the nomination petition and the petition circulator must sign the *Verified Statement of Circulator* on the nomination petition. Both statements must be notarized.

The candidate is also asked on the nomination petition form to state how his or her name should appear on the ballot. Names will be arranged by surname on the ballot in alphabetical order for each office. The City Charter prohibits the printing of any title or degree designating the business or profession of the candidate. The candidate's name may be a nickname, but may not include any punctuation marks setting out the nickname.

Candidates are encouraged to obtain more than the required 25 signatures. The City Clerk's Office will examine signatures until 25 valid signatures have been verified.

A [Financial Disclosure Statement](#) must be filed with the City Clerk at the same time as the filing of the *Verified Acceptance of Nomination*. See Financial Disclosure Statements on page 15.

PETITION DEADLINES

As provided by the *Charter* and state law, nomination petitions must be circulated and filed no earlier than 70 days before the election; no later than 49 days before the election.

A list of [Important Dates](#)
for the next municipal election is provided online.

NOTIFICATIONS

Within five days after the filing of the nomination petition, the City Clerk will notify the candidate and circulator(s) as to the sufficiency of the petition. This notification is typically done by email or phone, followed by a letter.

WITHDRAWAL FROM CANDIDACY

A person who has been nominated may withdraw from candidacy by filing a written request with the City Clerk. Forms for withdrawing from candidacy may be obtained from the City Clerk and must be filed no later than 42 days before the election.

WRITE-IN CANDIDATES

Write-in votes are counted only if the write-in candidate files an *Affidavit of Intent* with the City Clerk not later than 42 days before the election.

Affidavit forms are available from the City Clerk's Office.

DISTRICT/PRECINCT BOUNDARIES

A large (30" x 44") detailed color District-Precinct map showing Council Districts and City and County precincts within the Districts is available in the City Clerk's Office.

The City's GIS department, located at 215 North Mason, can provide a large map focusing on an individual District for \$30. General mapping services are available on line at www.fcgov.com/gis/maps.php.

Printable pdf maps are also available at <https://www.fcgov.com/cityclerk/district-boundaries.php> in sizes ranging from 8.5 x 11" to 34 x 44.

CAMPAIGN REGULATIONS

COMMENCEMENT OF CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES

There is no limitation on the point in time when a candidate for office may commence campaign activities. **Be aware that you become a candidate if you have publicly announced an intention to seek election. Close attention should be paid to the requirements for registering candidate committees and maintaining bank accounts (page 11), and the limitations on the placement of election signs (page 9).**

Public announcement shall mean:

- (1) Registration of a candidate committee; or
- (2) A statement made by the candidate signifying an interest in, or exploring the possibility of, seeking the office by means of a speech, advertisement or other communication reported or appearing in public media or in any place accessible to the public, including social media, that a reasonable person would expect to become public. (City Code, Sec 7-132)

ELECTIONEERING

State law prohibits electioneering (to take part actively and energetically in the activities of an election campaign; persuasion of voters in a political campaign) on election day within any polling place, or in any public street or room, or in any public manner within 100 feet of any building in which a polling place is located.

For municipal elections, electioneering is prohibited within 100 feet of City Hall, 300 LaPorte Avenue.

ELECTION SIGNS

Election signs fall within the definition of temporary signs and must meet all standards in Land Use Code Section 3.8.7.2. Permits are not required for placement of non-banner temporary signs on private property; however, permission must be obtained from the property owner before signs are placed on private property. If the temporary sign is a banner, a permit is required. Temporary signs may only be placed upon private property behind the sidewalk and only with the consent of the property owner.

Temporary signs, including election signs, are not allowed on park land, medians, sidewalks, street rights-of-way, in front of City buildings or any other public area owned or controlled by the City of Fort Collins without a permit. The public right-of-way includes the area between the sidewalk and the street, as well as approximately two feet behind the sidewalk. Banners require a permit.

Temporary signs are addressed in the City Code (Sec. 17-42) and the Land Use Code (Sec. 3.8.7.2). A temporary sign may be immediately removed if the City Engineer determines it has been placed on public property. The City will attempt to notify the owner that the temporary sign has been removed and will be destroyed within 10 days if not picked up. Any additional temporary signs will be immediately removed and destroyed without notification.

The number and size of temporary signs allowed in **residential and nonresidential zones** is contained in Land Use Code Section 3.8.7.2(F) and the signs cannot include lighting.

Election signs are allowed on a lot at any time prior to the Election Day to which the sign relates.

Note: The placement of election signs constitutes an announcement of candidacy and triggers the requirement to file a Candidate Affidavit (see page 11).

IDENTIFICATION OF WRITTEN CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

Whenever a candidate or candidate committee makes an expenditure for the purpose of financing communications expressly advocating a particular result in an election or solicits any contribution or contribution in-kind through any broadcasting station, newspaper, magazine, outdoor advertising facility, direct mailing or any other type of general public political advertising, the communication must clearly state that the communication is paid for by the candidate or candidate committee. (City Code Sec. 7-140)

These forms of communication include, but are not limited to, websites or social media of a candidate or candidate committee available to the general public and advertisements placed for a fee on another person's website or social media. The statement required must be clear and conspicuous in the communication. The required statement does not apply to communications where including the statement would be impractical, such as:

- (1) Bumper stickers, pins, buttons, pens and similar small items upon which the disclaimer cannot be conveniently printed;
- (2) Skywriting, water towers, wearing apparel, or other means of displaying an advertisement of such a nature that the inclusion of a disclaimer would be impracticable; or
- (3) Checks, receipts, and similar items of minimal value that are used for purely administrative purposes and do not contain a political message.

DOOR-TO-DOOR SOLICITATION

Political solicitations are exempt from the City Code provision prohibiting door-to-door solicitations, except where the occupant of a private residence has chosen to post a “**NO SOLICITATION**” or “**NO TRESPASSING**” sign near the entrance to the premises. Posting of such a sign prohibits *any* kind of solicitation at that residence.

The City Code sections relating to noncommercial door-to-door solicitation may be found at [Chapter 15, Division 1 of City Code](#).

LITTERING

Campaign material is not exempt from littering prohibitions. Campaign materials must be securely placed or deposited so as to prevent them from being blown or scattered by the wind. It is not permissible to place campaign materials in any fashion on motor vehicles without the vehicle owner’s permission.

PENALTIES

Failure to comply with the City Code and Land Use Code provisions relating to door-to-door solicitations and temporary signs is a misdemeanor and upon conviction punishable by a fine not to exceed \$2,650 or by imprisonment not to exceed 180 days, or both. [City Code Sec. 1-15]

CAMPAIGN REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

GENERAL

The Fort Collins City Council has established election campaign provisions to be applied to local elections in lieu of any state laws on the subject. The local provisions have been codified in [Chapter 7, Article V of the City Code](#).

CANDIDATE AFFIDAVIT

When an individual becomes a candidate as defined in Section 7-132 of the City Code, he or she must file a [Candidate Affidavit](#) within 10 days. In addition to certifying that he or she is a candidate for municipal office, the Candidate Affidavit also includes a statement certifying that he or she is familiar with the provisions of Chapter 7, Article V of the City Code.

Failure to file a Candidate Affidavit as required by the City Code will result in the disqualification of the individual as a candidate for the office being sought.

[Candidate Affidavit](#) forms are provided online.

CANDIDATE COMMITTEES

A candidate committee consists of a person, including the candidate, or persons with the common purpose of receiving contributions and making expenditures under the authority of a candidate.

A candidate can only have one candidate committee.

COMMITTEE REGISTRATION

All candidate committees are required to register with the City Clerk **before** accepting contributions.

All contact information provided on the registration form, including email and website addresses, will be provided to the general public upon request and posted on the City's website with other election-related information.

The [Committee Registration](#) form is available online and in the City Clerk's Office.

A registered committee must promptly report any changes of address, telephone, email, registered agent or change in financial institution or account to the City Clerk.

[Important Dates](#)

BANK ACCOUNTS

All contributions received by a candidate committee must be deposited and maintained in a financial institution in a separate account, the title of which must include the name of the committee. Documentation of the account, satisfactory to the City Clerk, is required with the committee registration.

All records pertaining to contributions and related accounts must be maintained by the committee for one (1) year following any election in which the committee received contributions unless a complaint has been filed under Section 7-145(a) of the City Code alleging a violation of the provisions of Chapter 7, Article V of the City Code or the person or committee has received notice of an investigation or prosecution of a violation of this Article by the City or other law enforcement authority, in which case they must be maintained until final disposition of the complaint and any consequent court proceedings. Such records are subject to inspection in connection with any investigation or other action to enforce the terms of Chapter 7, Article V of the City Code. (See Complaints, page 15)

Note: Although the City Code requires that the account include the name of the committee, it is recommended the account be opened as a personal checking account. Other types of accounts, such as non-profit or corporate, require additional documentation that candidates do not typically have at the local campaign level.

CAMPAIGN REPORTS

All candidate committees are required to report to the City Clerk their contributions and contributions in kind received, including the name and address of each person who has made contributions or contributions in kind in the amount of \$20 or more, expenditures made, and obligations entered into by the committee.

Reports are due on:

- the 35th day before the election
- the 21st day before the election
- the 14th day before the election
- by noon on the Friday before the election
- the 35th day after the election
- the 70th day after the election, and
- annually on April 1 until such time as a termination report is filed.

If the reporting day falls on a weekend or legal holiday, the report must be filed by the close of the next business day.

TIP: In the first report, due on the 35th day before the election, the *Funds on Hand at Beginning of Reporting Period*, should always be \$0.00.

All reports must be submitted on [forms](#) provided by the City Clerk and complete in all respects. The City Clerk's Office may contact the committee's registered agent if clarification is needed with regard to any report filed.

Reports must be current as of two days prior to the filing date.

A campaign report is considered timely if the paper report is received by the City Clerk's office by the end of the business day on the date due or if a copy is filed electronically not later than midnight MST on the

date due. The report due by noon on the Friday before the election is due by noon, regardless of the manner of filing.

All campaign reports will be scanned as an image and published on the City's website. Reports that have been typed or handwritten in black ink produce the best images.

[Campaign Report forms](#), in Excel format, are available for download from the City's website. Paper forms can be provided if necessary.

CONTRIBUTION LIMITS

Contributions are subject to the following limits:

- \$100 total for Mayoral candidates
- \$75 total to District Councilmember candidates

No person may make a contribution or contribution in kind in the name of another person, nor may any person knowingly permit such person's name to be used by another person to effect such a contribution or contribution in kind. These limitations apply to all contributions or contributions in kind, whether made directly to a candidate committee or indirectly via earmarked gifts passed through an intermediary, except that these limitations do not apply to:

- (1) Contributions or contributions in kind made by a candidate to his or her own candidate committee;
- (2) Independent expenditures;
- (3) Monetary loans that are: (a) personally guaranteed in writing by the candidate, the candidate's immediate family or a business entity in which the candidate owns at least five percent; or (b) secured by real or personal property owned by the candidate, the candidate's immediate family or a business entity in which the candidate owns at least five percent; or
- (4) Contributions made to a candidate committee by another candidate committee established by the same candidate for the office of Mayor or Councilmember.

A candidate committee which receives a contribution in excess of the limits set forth above must remit the excess to the contributor no later than 10 business days after receiving the contribution.

JOINT CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions made jointly with another person through the issuance of a check drawn on a jointly-owned bank account are prohibited **unless**:

- (1) the total amount of the joint contribution is less than the maximum amount that can be contributed by one person (\$100 to Mayoral candidates; \$75 to District candidates); or
- (2) the check is signed by all owners of the account, in which event the amount of the total contribution shall be allocated equally among all such persons unless a different allocation is specified on the face of the check. *(Example: A check written on the account of Bill and Betty Smith for \$150 to a District candidate must be signed by both Bill and Betty and will be assumed to be a \$75 contribution from each person.)*

No candidate committee shall knowingly accept a contribution in violation of these requirements.

PROHIBITED CONTRIBUTORS

A candidate committee cannot accept contributions from any person who is not a citizen of the United States, from a foreign government, or from any foreign corporation that does not have authority to transact business in Colorado pursuant to Article 115 of Title 7 of the Colorado Revised Statutes.

A candidate committee cannot make a contribution or contribution in kind to or accept a contribution or contribution in kind from the candidate committee of another candidate.

A candidate committee cannot accept a contribution or contribution in kind from his or her candidate committee that was established or maintained for a federal, state, or county election campaign or office.

In addition, pursuant to Article VIII, Section 7 of the Charter, no political party or city employee, directly or indirectly, and no public service corporation, nor any other person, firm or corporation, owning, interested in, or intending to apply for any franchise or contract with the City may contribute or expend any money or other valuable thing, directly or indirectly, to assist in the election or defeat of any candidate.

EXPENDITURES

All expenditures must be documented and all records pertaining to those expenditures must be maintained by the committee for one (1) year following any election in which the committee expended the funds unless a complaint has been filed under Subsection 7-145(a) alleging a violation of the provisions of this Article, or the person or committee has received notice of an investigation or prosecution of a violation of Chapter 7, Article V, in which case they must be maintained until final disposition of the complaint and any consequent court proceedings.

Documentation includes:

- invoices, receipts, and instruments of payment
- the name and address of the vendor(s) or payee(s) providing the property, materials, or services
- the amount of the expenditure
- copies of any public communications produced as a result of the expenditure.

The records shall be made available within three (3) business days upon request of the City and subject to inspection in connection with any investigation or other action to enforce the terms of Chapter 7, Article V.

There are no limits on the amount of expenditures by a candidate committee. However, expenditures must be reported as noted earlier in this Section.

EXPENDITURES FOR POLITICAL ADVERTISING

A candidate committee cannot pay to any radio or television station, newspaper, periodical, internet advertiser or website provider, social media provider, or other supplier of materials or services a higher charge than that normally required for local commercial customers for comparable use of space, materials or services. Any such rate shall not be rebated, directly or indirectly.

If any radio or television station, newspaper, or periodical charges a candidate committee a lower rate for use of space, materials, or services than the rate charged another candidate committee for comparable use of space materials, or services, the difference in such rate must be reported as a contribution in kind to the candidate committee that was charged the lower rate.

FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Pursuant to Section 2-636 of the City Code, each candidate must file a financial disclosure statement with the City Clerk at the same time as filing an acceptance of nomination. The purpose of the statement is to disclose information concerning source of income, financial and property interests, offices and directorships, creditors, and business associations.

Failure to file a financial disclosure statement as required by the City Code will result in the disqualification of the individual as a candidate for the office being sought. [City Code Sec. 7-133(c)]

Elected candidates are required to provide an amended disclosure statement, or written notification that there has been no change in the disclosure statement filed prior to the election, within 30 days of their election and each year thereafter prior to May 15. The City Clerk's Office provides written notification of the disclosures required from elected candidates.

The [Financial Disclosure Statement](#) form is available online.

REPORTS ARE PUBLIC RECORD

Any report submitted pursuant to Chapter 7, Article V of the City Code will be made available for public inspection and will be available on the City's website.

No information contained in any campaign report may be sold or used by any person for the purpose of soliciting contributions or for any commercial purpose.

COMPLAINTS

Any candidate or registered elector who has reason to believe a violation of Chapter 7, Article V, of the City Code, has occurred by any candidate, candidate committee, issue committee, small-scale issue committee or political committee may file a written complaint to the City Clerk, no later than sixty (60) days after the alleged violation has occurred.

The complaint must contain:

- (1) The name of the alleged violator;
- (2) The Code provision allegedly violated;
- (3) A brief statement or description of the offense allegedly committed and the basis for the allegation;
- (4) Identification of any relevant documents or other evidence;
- (5) Identification of any witnesses or persons with relevant knowledge; and
- (6) The name, address and telephone number of the complainant.

Any complaint received by the City Clerk will be forwarded to the City Attorney, who will evaluate the complaint for probable cause. If the City Attorney determines that no probable cause exists, that the complaint fails to allege an enforceable violation, or that the requirements of § 7-145 were not met by the complainant, the City Attorney will notify the City Clerk, who will, in turn, notify the complainant in writing.

If the City Attorney determines probable cause exists, the City Attorney may notify Fort Collins Police Services, who, in consultation with the City Attorney, may file and serve a summons and complaint to the respondent. The City Attorney retains prosecutorial discretion on whether to ultimately file criminal charges. If the City Attorney determines filing a summons and complaint is inappropriate, he or she will notify the City Clerk, who will, in turn, notify the complainant and respondent in writing.

Notwithstanding the above, nothing in City Code Chapter 7, Article 5 shall be read to preclude the City Attorney from declaring a conflict of interest and taking appropriate action in accordance with the Code and general practices of the City, including, but not limited to, hiring special counsel, if deemed necessary and advisable under the circumstances.

The City Manager is charged with ultimate authority to pursue complaints under Article 5 and is hereby authorized to adopt administrative regulations consistent with the provisions of Article 5.

Action the complainant may take after the City Attorney determination.

- (a) After having received written notification from the City Clerk pursuant to § 7-146 that the City Attorney determined filing a summons and complaint is inappropriate, or after one hundred eighty (180) days of filing the complaint, whichever is first, the complainant may bring a civil action in District Court.
- (b) The complainant has one (1) year from the date of the violation to bring such suit.
- (c) The complainant may sue to compel compliance with this Article, provided however, that complainant must first file a complaint with the City Clerk, pursuant to Section 7-145, and otherwise exhausts his or her administrative remedies.
- (d) Any person who knowingly violates this Article may be civilly liable in an amount up to two thousand dollars (\$2,000.), or, if applicable, three (3) times the amount of the discrepancy, whichever is greater.
- (e) Reasonable attorneys' fees for the prevailing party may be awarded if the amount of civil liability alleged is greater than seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$7,500.).
- (f) In determining the amount of civil liability, the court may take into account the seriousness of the violation and culpability of the defendant. (City Code, Chapter 7, Secs. 7-145 through 7-150)

See City Code Section 1-15 for general penalty and surcharges for civil infractions.

NOTARY SERVICES

Some election forms must be notarized and some must be filed under oath. Notary public services are usually available at banks, car dealerships, real estate offices, and at places that provide mailing services. A notary public may charge for each document notarized.

NOTE: The City Clerk's Office is unable to notarize any election-related documents.

ORGANIZATION MEETING

Terms of office for the Mayor and District Council members elected in a regular municipal election will begin at a regular or special City Council meeting held after final certification of the election. **At that meeting the City Council will elect a Mayor Pro Tem from among the Councilmembers for a two-year term and the City Clerk will administer oaths of office for the newly-elected Mayor and Councilmembers.**

Certification of the election will occur on the 10th day after the election. Any recount proceedings required after certification of the election may delay the organization meeting.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Regular Council meetings are generally held on the first and third Tuesdays of each month beginning at 6:00 p.m. (Ceremonial matters, such as proclamations and presentations, are handled by the Mayor at 5:30 p.m. prior to regular meetings.) Work sessions are generally held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at 6:00 p.m.

Agendas for Council meetings are available on the Thursday prior to each meeting on the City's web site at www.fcgov.com/agendas and at the City Clerk's Office. All Council meetings, including work sessions, are televised on FCTV (Cable channels 14 and 881) and video-streamed live on the City's web site at <http://www.fcgov.com/fctv>.

POWERS

The [Charter](#) defines the powers and responsibilities of the Mayor, Mayor Pro Tem, and City Council.

All powers of the City and the determination of all matters of policy are vested in the Council, except as otherwise provided in the Charter. The City of Fort Collins is a home rule city with the Council-Manager form of government.

The Mayor presides at Council meetings and is the recognized head of the City government for all ceremonial purposes and for purposes of military law. The Mayor executes documents and performs any other duties provided by ordinance. The Mayor Pro Tem serves in these capacities during the absence of the Mayor.

TERMS OF OFFICE

Councilmembers serve four-year terms, and the Mayor is elected for a term of two years.

Article XVIII, Section 11 of the State Constitution limits elected officials to two consecutive terms. Terms of office which are two years or shorter in duration, are limited to three consecutive terms. This limitation applies to terms of office beginning on or after January 1, 1995.

COMPENSATION

Council compensation can be found on the City's website at <http://www.fcgov.com/council>. These amounts are adjusted annually (effective in January) for inflation in accordance with the Consumer Price Index, Denver-Boulder-Greeley.

ETHICS AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Members of the City Council are subject to City Code and Charter provisions relating to [ethical rules of conduct](#) and [conflicts of interest](#). Candidates are encouraged to become familiar with these provisions.

MISCELLANEOUS ELECTION INFORMATION

ELECTION LOGO

The City of Fort Collins has created an election logo in an effort to increase voter recognition of City elections. This logo is available for use by candidates subject to certain terms and conditions available at www.fcgov.com/cityclerk/fcvote-logo-terms.php. Slight variations of the logo (with or without the City's web site domain) are available. Please contact the City Clerk's Office if you would like to obtain graphic files for use in your campaign materials.



PRECINCTS AND POLLS

There are currently 106 municipal election precincts, numbered sequentially from 1 through 106. This numbering system differs from precinct numbers established by the Larimer County Elections Office. Voter registration lists and/or mailing labels are available from the Larimer County Elections Office. Please consult with the Larimer County Elections Office regarding your specific needs and the costs for producing those records. In order to accommodate your request, Larimer County will need to know the County precinct numbers you want. It may also be possible to request all voters in a particular Council District (referred to as a "ward" in the voter registration system).

Because every municipal election is a mail ballot election, voters will not go to polling places in each precinct to vote. However, there will be one "on-site" polling place at the City Clerk's Office for voters who want to vote their ballots in person or who need a replacement ballot.

VOTER REGISTRATION

Voters in City elections are registered electors who live within the Fort Collins city limits. In order to participate in a municipal election, the elector must live within the city limits for 22 days prior to the election.

Voter registration forms are available at the Larimer County Elections Office, the Fort Collins City Clerk's Office, and the Driver's License Office. Registration can be done online via the [Secretary of State web site](#) and forms can be downloaded at that same site. Registration can occur up to and on Election Day; however, anyone wishing to receive a ballot by mail must register no later than the eighth day before Election Day.

Often candidates inquire about conducting voter registration drives. Colorado law and rules promulgated by the Secretary of State define a voter registration drive (VRD) as the distribution and collection of voter registration applications by two or more persons for delivery to a county clerk and recorder.

VRDs must be registered with the Secretary of State on an annual basis; authorizations to conduct drives are valid until December 31st of the calendar year in which they were signed. The VRD organizer must complete a mandatory training provided by the Secretary of State before circulating any voter registration forms.

Please visit the GoVoteColorado.com for further information.

ADDRESS CHANGES

Registered voters who have moved since the last election must complete a change of address by 8 days before Election Day in order to receive a mail ballot at the voter's correct address. Mail ballots **will not** be forwarded and will be returned to the City Clerk's Office as undeliverable if the voter moved and failed to complete an address change by the deadline.

Address changes must be made online at [GoVoteColorado.com](https://www.govotecolorado.com) or in person at the Larimer County Elections Office, 200 West Oak.

REPLACEMENT BALLOTS

Voters may apply in writing at the City Clerk's Office for a replacement ballot under the following circumstances:

- The voter did not receive the ballot mailed to him or her.
- The ballot was destroyed or damaged.
- The ballot was lost.
- The voter spoiled the ballot and needs a new one.

The deadline to apply for a replacement ballot is 7:00 p.m. on Election Day. In order to be counted, replacement ballots must be received by the City Clerk's Office no later than 7:00 p.m. on Election Day.

IN PERSON VOTING

Voters may take the ballot they received in the mail to the City Clerk's Office to vote in person and deposit the voted ballot into a ballot box. The deadline to vote on-site, using a ballot received in the mail, is 7:00 p.m. on Election Day.

The on-site polling place at the City Clerk's Office will be open from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday (except holidays), beginning approximately two weeks before Election Day. On Election Day, the on-site polling place will be open from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m.

ABSENTEE VOTERS

Absentee ballots can be mailed to voters who will be out of town during the time mail-in balloting takes place. Application must be made in writing to request that an absentee ballot be mailed to an address other than the voter's place of residence.

The earliest date to apply for an absentee ballot is January 2. The deadline to apply for an absentee ballot **that must be mailed** is seven days before Election Day at 5:00 p.m.

Absentee ballots must be returned to the City Clerk's Office before 7:00 p.m. on Election Day in order to be counted.

UNIFORM MILITARY AND OVERSEAS VOTERS (UOCAVA)

Members of the Uniformed Services or Merchant Marines on active duty, absent from Fort Collins by reason of active duty, eligible spouses of those members of the Uniformed Services or Merchant Marines or US citizens residing outside the US who are residents of the City and are eligible to vote in City elections, but are absent, are eligible to submit absentee votes in City elections. Ballots received from citizens who qualify for UOCAVA and who mailed their ballots by 7:00 p.m., Election Day, will be counted if they are received by the City Clerk by 5:00 p.m. mountain time on the eighth day after the election. (City Code, Chapter 7, Article IX)

SIGNATURE VERIFICATION

Verification of each signature on the self-affirmation on the ballot envelope will be conducted by election workers. Signatures will be compared with the elector's digitized signature in the statewide voter registration system. Voters will have an opportunity to correct any ballot that is rejected due to signature discrepancy. Voters will be notified by mail of any signature discrepancy and will be allowed to correct the discrepancy up to eight days after Election Day. Ballots with corrected self-affirmation signatures will be counted before final certification of the election.

ELECTION NIGHT TABULATION

Ballots will be tabulated at City Hall, 300 LaPorte Avenue, after 7:00 p.m. on Election Day. **Unofficial results are not expected to be available until after 9:00 p.m.** There will be no periodic returns; the only returns will be the unofficial tabulation of all ballots cast on Election Day. Final results will be released upon final certification of the election 10 days later and will include additional votes cast by uniformed military and overseas voters (City Code, Chapter 7, Article IX) and other ballots held for signature verification.

Results will be posted on www.fcgov.com after all ballots have been processed.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Upon completion of the canvass ten days after Election Day, the candidate receiving the highest number of votes for a particular office shall be declared elected to that office and will be sworn in at a regular or special City Council meeting held after final certification of the election.