

## WASHINGTON COUNTY REQUIREMENTS FOR WRITE IN CANDIDATES

- Please notify the Election Office at least 2 weeks before an election (and before Election Day) that you will be running an active write in campaign. This will insure that we will accumulate your votes.
- Complete a Write in Declaration stating you will accept votes under the names of...i.e. Joseph P. Smith, Joe Smith, Joseph Peter Smith, Joe Smyth, etc.
  - The names have to be within reason we will not accept J. Smith because if more than one J. Smith (we do not know whether it is Joseph, James, Jean, Jane, etc.) within a municipality or voting district.
  - If you are a Jr. or Sr. and you both reside within the same district, we will not accumulate these votes unless they specifically state Jr. or Sr. We cannot guess the voter's intent, it must be clear.
- During a **Primary Election**, as a write-in candidate to win the nomination and move onto the November Election, you must have as many write in votes as petition signatures required for your name on the ballot.
  - For example, if you are running for Township Supervisor and running a write-in campaign you must have at least 10 votes **and** more than anyone else on the ballot.
  - Anyone who's name appears on the ballot is required to have a certain number of petition signatures and as a write in candidate you are required to have the same amount of votes. In November, it is the candidate(s) with the most votes who is declared the winner, whether it is one vote or 100 votes.
- In the **Primary Election** you can ask both Democrats and Republicans to write in your name regardless of your party affiliation; however the total Democratic and Republican votes are counted separately towards your required number.
- Write-in candidates are required to adhere to Campaign Finance Laws. If you spend or receive funds less than \$250, you are required to file a Campaign Finance Statement. If you spend or receive \$250.00 or more in a reporting period, you are required to file a Campaign Finance Report. Further information is available at the Election Office, or on our web site, [www.co.washington.pa.us/elections](http://www.co.washington.pa.us/elections).
- If you are successful in your write in campaign, you are required to file paperwork and pay a filing fee if applicable to the office before a specified date. If you fail to do so, your name **will not** appear on the November ballot if you won in the Primary. If you won by write in votes for the November election and fail to file your paperwork you **will not** be issued a Certificate of Election and will not be able to hold office.
- Please be aware that if you run a write in campaign that it takes us several weeks to accumulate write in votes. We do not start the accumulation until the Friday after the election and depending on the number of write ins it could take up to a week or ten days to finish.
- As always the Election Office is here to answer any other questions you may have, please do not hesitate to contact us at 724-228-6750 or by e-mail at [washcoelections@co.washington.pa.us](mailto:washcoelections@co.washington.pa.us).