

CAMPAIGN HANDBOOK



EQUALITY STATE POLICY CENTER

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INTRODUCTION

ABOUT RUN WYOMING



RUN Wyoming is a campaign and candidate team training to teach Wyomingites the skills to run a successful campaign. RUN WY is a nonpartisan and open to all Wyoming residents, regardless of partisan affiliation or filing status. This handbook is updated periodically and the current version is available at equalitystate.org

HOSTED BY EQUALITY STATE POLICY CENTER (ESPC)



Founded in 1993, Equality State Policy Center conducts research, public education, and principled advocacy to enhance and protect the rules, processes, accountability, and public access that allow Wyomingites to participate meaningfully in their self-governance. ESPC advances fair elections and transparent government in support of all Wyoming communities.

www.equalitystate.org

HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

Whether you are a candidate for office or a staff member on a campaign, this handbook provides you with essential information and frameworks for launching, running, and winning campaigns in Wyoming.

This handbook is designed to be interactive, with questions and worksheets for candidates to use as they navigate the personal, legal, and strategic considerations of their campaign. The strategic knowledge is specific to Wyoming politics and the dates and deadlines are relevant to the **2026 election cycle** whenever possible. This handbook is not comprehensive on all topics, but we reference additional resources throughout. There are countless books and online resources for candidates, while your greatest resource for specific local knowledge will be leaders in your own community.

For further information on Wyoming elections, refer to the **Secretary of State Elections Homepage** and their **Biennial Campaign Guide**. The RUN WY handbook and training are for informational purposes only and do not constitute legal or financial advice. Please consult relevant Wyoming statute, WY Secretary of State's office, and **local County/City election officials** for further guidance.

From all of us at the Equality State Policy Center: Thank you for stepping up to serve Wyoming, and good luck!



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FIVE ELEMENTS OF A WINNING CAMPAIGN

While there are many nuances to running a successful campaign for office, it's not rocket science. If your candidate and staff follow the key guidelines listed here, you'll be well on your way to achieving your campaign goals. Subsequent sections of this handbook will help you build on these elements to strengthen your campaign further.



1. Have a clear and concise reason for running

- Your story is powerful. Connecting your experience and values to why you are running is the most important way to build support in your community.
- Develop a succinct and compelling “stump speech.”
- Be disciplined; stay on message - always.



2. Have a plan to win

- Time is the most valuable resource in a campaign; spend it wisely. Your plans aren't real unless they're written down. Maintain a detailed calendar to track events, manage deadlines, and budget time efficiently. The campaign with the best lists wins. From voter contact to fundraising and volunteer recruitment, you need to build and update lists.



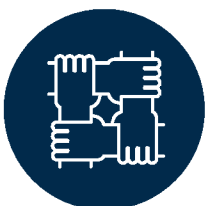
3. Raise funds sufficient to execute your plan

- Your first fundraising list includes friends and family.
- Fundraising helps you communicate your message to voters.
- In order to receive, you have to make the ask; be specific.



4. Effectively communicate with voters

- Direct (one-on-one, in-person) contact is the most effective way to communicate with voters.
- Targeted communication makes better use of your limited resources. Door knocking, phone banking, and direct mail are targeted; yard signs are not.



5. Work diligently

- As the candidate, you have the greatest ability to communicate your message, raise money, and persuade voters.
- You can't do it alone! Build a solid team of core supporters, staff, and volunteers to help execute your campaign plan.

MAKING THE DECISION TO RUN

Before throwing your hat into the ring, a candidate must do some internal and external reflection to decide if they are the right person at the right moment to step up as a leader within the community. Take some time—by yourself and with family, friends, and trusted advisors—to reflect on and discuss these questions.



A. SELF-ASSESSMENT

Why do you want to run?

What experience do you bring to the table?

What are your strengths and weaknesses?

Do you have the capacity, resources, and support to win?



B. POLITICAL LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

Who is your opponent?

What is the political environment of your district / county / municipality?

What is your win number? (See p. 11)

Who are your allies?

Why do you believe you can win?

HOW TO FILE FOR CANDIDACY

Once you have decided to run for office, you must formally apply for candidacy.

I'm running for _____ in _____ as a _____ candidate.
[office] [district/county/municipality] [party]

1. Fill in the blanks above.
2. Visit <https://sos.wyo.gov/forms/default.aspx?root=Elections> to find the proper form for your desired office and party designation (Major, Minor Independent).
3. Look at the bottom of the relevant form (or the tables on p. 6-7 of this handbook) to ensure you meet the qualifications for that office including any age, residency, or citizenship requirements.
4. Complete the application form.
5. Submit the completed form and filing fee to the proper filing office.
 - For Federal, Statewide, and Legislative offices, file with the Secretary of State's office, either [online](#), in person, or by mail.
 - For County and Municipal offices, file with the [County Clerk](#) in person.



A. 2026 FILING DEADLINES

Primary Election (August 18) Filing Period:

Thursday, May 14 at 8:00AM through Friday, May 29 at 5:00PM

- Applies to any office with a primary election, including: Federal offices, Statewide offices, Legislative offices, and most County and Municipal offices except for trustee positions (see below).

General Election (November 3) Filing Period:

August 5 at 8:00AM through August 24 at 5:00PM

- Applies to any office without a primary election, including: School Board Trustee, Cemetery District Trustee, Hospital District Trustee, Community College Board Trustee; Museum District Trustee, Conservation District Supervisor, and Fire District Director.



B. FILING FEES AND QUALIFICATIONS

Any questions about filing qualifications, fees, or procedures can be directed to the offices of the Secretary of State and/or your local county/city clerk(s).

Federal Offices

Primary Filing Window: May 14-29

Office	Filing Office	Qualifications	Fee
United States Senator	Secretary of State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30+ years old • U.S. Citizen for 9+ years • WY inhabitant 	\$750
United States House of Representatives	Secretary of State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25+ years old • U.S. Citizen for 7+ years • WY inhabitant 	\$750

Statewide Offices

Primary Filing Window: May 14-29

Office	Filing Office	Qualifications	Fee
Governor	Secretary of State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30+ years old • U.S. Citizen • Qualified Elector** • WY resident for 5+ years 	\$300
Secretary of State; State Auditor; State Treasurer; State Superintendent of Public Instruction	Secretary of State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25+ years old • U.S. Citizen • Qualified Elector** 	\$300

Legislative Offices

Primary Filing Window: May 14-29

Office	Filing Office	Qualifications	Fee
State Senator	Secretary of State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25+ years old • U.S. Citizen • Qualified Elector** • District resident for 1+ year 	\$100
State Representative	Secretary of State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21+ years old • U.S. Citizen • Qualified Elector** • District resident for 1+ year 	\$100

County Offices

Primary Filing Window: May 14-29

Office	Filing Office	Qualifications	Fee
County Commissioner	County Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualified Elector** • County resident 	\$100
County Assessor	County Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Own real property in county • Qualified Elector** • County resident 	\$100
County Attorney	County Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member of the bar of WY • Qualified Elector** • County resident 	\$100
District Attorney	County Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensed attorney for 4+ years • Member of the bar of WY • Qualified Elector** • County resident 	\$100
Other county offices (Sheriff; Clerk; Coroner; Treasurer; Clerk of District Court)	County Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualified Elector** • County resident • Check with County Clerk for additional requirements 	\$100

Municipal Offices

Primary Filing Window: May 14-29

Office	Filing Office	Qualifications	Fee
Mayor	City or Town Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registered voter and resident of municipality for 1+ year 	\$25
City / Town Council	City or Town Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registered voter and resident of municipality for 1+ year 	\$25

General-Only Offices

General Filing Window: August 5-24

Office	Filing Office	Qualifications	Fee
School Board Trustee, Cemetery District Trustee, Hospital District Trustee, Community College Board Trustee; Museum District Trustee, Conservation District Supervisor, and Fire District Director.	County Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check with your local clerk. 	

** “Qualified elector” includes every citizen of the United States who is a bona fide resident of Wyoming, has registered to vote and will be at least eighteen (18) years of age on the day of the election at which he may offer to vote. No person is a qualified elector who is a currently adjudicated mentally incompetent person, or who has been convicted of a felony and his civil or voting rights have not been restored.” W.S. 22-1-102(a)(xxvi).



C. FORMING YOUR CANDIDATE COMMITTEE

After filing as a candidate, if you are coordinating financially with others on your campaign, you may have to formally establish a campaign committee:

“Candidate’s campaign committees are every group of two (2) or more persons who join together for the purpose of raising, collecting or expending money to be used in the aid of the election of a specific candidate for public office.” W.S. 22-1-102(a)(vii).

“A Statement of Formation for the committee must be filed within ten (10) days after its formation.” W.S. 22-25-101(b).

- County and Municipal candidates must file the Statement of Formation as a paper copy with the county clerk: https://sos.wyo.gov/Forms/Elections/Campaign_Finance/Candidate_Comm_Formation.pdf
- Statewide, Legislative, and Judicial candidates must file the Statement of Formation electronically through the Wyoming Campaign Finance Information System (WYCFIS): https://www.wycampaignfinance.gov/WYCFWebApplication/GSF_Authentication/Default.aspx

The following information is required in the Statement of Formation:

- Committee’s name and address
- Candidate’s name
- Names and residence addresses of the committee chair and treasurer*
- Date of formation
- Purpose of the committee

**The candidate may serve as the chair or treasurer for their campaign committee, or neither.*

A candidate’s campaign committee is required to file statements of contributions and expenditures between 7-14 days prior to any election.

See the [Wyoming Secretary of State’s Current Campaign Guide](#) for more information on campaign committees and C&E reporting.

*Wyoming Secretary of State Website houses many resources and helpful information:
<https://sos.wyo.gov/Elections/>*



D. OPEN A BANK ACCOUNT FOR YOUR CANDIDATE COMMITTEE

After filing as a candidate and establishing a campaign committee, it is recommended that you open a new bank account to manage contributions and expenditures:

Use your committee name for bank account.

Visit with your local banker. You may decide to informally use the candidate's social security number or formalize the committee and secure a separate EIN (takes extra time) to use for the bank account set up.

Possible Committee Names for Bank Account:

- last name for position (senate, house, legislature, governor, commissioner, etc.)
 - ex. Mitchell for State Auditor/ Scott for Northern Arapaho Tribal Business Council
- first name for position (school board, county clerk, mayor, city/town council, etc.)
 - ex. Grace for Mayor/ Irene for Eastern Shoshone Tribal Business Council
- first and last name for position (state auditor, county sheriff, fire district director, etc.)
 - ex. Estelle Reel for Superintendent of Public Instruction
- first/last/both name for Wyoming or County or City
 - ex. Nellie Tayloe Ross for Wyoming/ Nellie for Wyoming/ Ross for Wyoming
 - ex. Dora for Hot Springs County/ McGrath for Hot Springs County
 - ex. Susan Wissler for Dayton/ Susan for Dayton/ Wissler for Dayton
- friends of candidate's name
 - ex. Friends of Liz Byrd
- committee to elect first and last name
 - ex. Committee to Elect Mary Godat Bellamy
- first and last name committee to elect
 - ex. Thyra Thomson Committee to Elect

E. TERMINATE THE COMMITTEE AND BANK ACCOUNT, OR CONTINUE

At the end, upon submitting final statement of contributions and expenditures when all debts are retired, and the election is complete, candidate may terminate the committee or continue to file a statement of contributions and expenditures by December 31 of all odd-numbered years. W.S. 22-25-106(b)(ii)

Steps to Terminate:

- Statewide candidate committees: terminate online at <https://www.wycampaignfinance.gov>.
- County and municipal committees: terminate by filing a Candidate's Campaign Committee Termination Report with the county clerk, or by checking the appropriate box on the final Statement of Contributions and Expenditures.
- Close your campaign-related bank account

CANDIDATE ACTION PLAN

It's easy to become a candidate; it takes a lot of work and planning to be a great one. This section will walk you through: A) The minimum legal requirements and deadlines for CANDIDATES from the Secretary of State; and, B) Best practices you can follow to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of your campaign.



A. REQUIRED DEADLINES

1. File your candidacy application form and fee to the proper office by the appropriate deadline (see p. 5-7)
 - Primary filing period: May 14-29
 - General filing period: August 5-24
2. File a Statement of Formation for your campaign committee within ten days of formation (see p. 8)
3. File a PRIMARY Statement of Contributions and Expenditures (C&E report) between August 4-11 for any C&E from January 1, 2025 through August 18, 2026 (see p. 19)
4. File a GENERAL C&E report between October 20-27 for any C&E from August 20 through December 31, 2026
5. If you have additional C&E to report after August 11 for the primary or October 27 for the general, file an amended C&E report after respective election day by Aug 28 or Nov 13.



B. RECOMMENDED CAMPAIGN ACTIONS

- Create a campaign plan (see p. 10)
- Map out your campaign timeline and keep a detailed calendar of key dates and deadlines
- Find a campaign manager - this person can be hired or a volunteer, depending on the scale, budget, and goals of the campaign
- Develop a campaign budget (see p. 12)
- Form a field team by recruiting volunteers, field organizers, and canvassers
- Create your fundraising plan and friends and family list (see p. 20)
- Design a logo and website - hire a graphic designer, find a skilled volunteer, or use common design programs (e.g., Canva, Adobe Illustrator, Design Wizard) to do it yourself
- Plan your strategy and tactics for direct voter contact (see p. 11-14)
- Refine and practice your message and communication strategy (see p. 15-18)
- Host a campaign event
- Participate in candidate forums/debates - if strategic
- Talk to voters - knock doors, make phone calls!

CAMPAIGN PLANNING 101

From deciding torunto election day,your campaignplan is your roadmap to success. You want to establish your goals and strategy from the beginning so that you can follow them and hold yourself and others accountable throughout the campaign. Planning ahead also helps maximize precious resources of time, energy, and money, rather than making inefficient decisions on the fly. Remember - if you don't write your campaign plan down, it doesn't exist! Put your plan in writing and check in with it often throughout the campaign cycle.



Seek Advice

- Talk withthose who have been there before (party officials, former elected officials, consultants, etc.)
- Their expertise could help you avoid costly mistakes



There's No "I" In Team

- Writingthe campaignplanisnot a job for the candidate alone - you need buy-in from the rest of your team
- Hold a series of organize, goal-oriented planning sessions to map it out
- Invite your "kitchen cabinet" (staff, trusted leaders or political insiders, spouse/partners)



Start With Your Timeline

- Use large wall calendars to add all key dates, such as the filing deadline and election dates
- Overlay with important events (family birthdays, holidays, first day of school, county fair, etc.)
- Work backwards from election day to plan your hiring, fundraising, voter contact, and media benchmarks



Break It Down

- Deal with each component of your campaign separately, either as a group or individually
- Key areas: voter contact, fundraising, messaging, and earned and paid media
- Combine and overlay to complete the entire plan



Keep It Consistent

- Strategies in each area of your plan should support other areas as well as your overall goals
- Avoid any activity that does not directly support your ultimate goal of getting to your win number (50%+1 votes) - there are no resources to waste!



Stick To It!

- This plan is your most important campaign tool
- Use it to keep you focused, guide your use of time and money, and keep you on track in case of inevitable bumps in the road



A. KNOW YOUR WIN NUMBER

Your win number is the number of votes you need to get to win your election.

For most elections that are decided by a majority, the baseline win number is equal to half of the votes cast plus 1 (50%+1). You can look at the vote totals in races for your desired seat from previous years, as well as numbers of registered voters, to estimate the expected vote total for your 2024 race. These historical election results can be found through the [Secretary of State's office](#) or your [County Clerk](#). If you're facing an incumbent (the current holder of the office running for reelection), you might look at their historical election results to get a better estimate of how many votes they've received and how their challengers have performed.

The true win number might be less than a majority in races with more than two candidates, where a plurality is sufficient to win. In crowded races (lots of candidates), a campaign might try to make more specific estimates as to how voters will behave and therefore what the number required to get the most votes will be, even if that number is less than 50%.

Once you have established your win number, you can work backwards to figure out the strategy, tactics, team, and voter contact necessary to reach that number!



B. STRATEGY AND TACTICS

Your campaign strategy is the large-scale plan for how you will use your resources to achieve your goals within the opportunities and constraints of the political landscape. Tactics are the specific actions you will take to enact your strategy. They are both adaptive, iterative, and ongoing processes, and both effective strategy and tactics are both required to win a campaign.

In the big picture, strategy boils down to articulating how we will persuade and/or turn out enough voters to reach our win number. Strategy requires imagination and coming up with creative ways to be resourceful with our resources, as well as thinking ahead to what your opponents will do and being ready to respond.

Your overall strategy should include voter contact goals, including clear, quantifiable metrics such as daily, weekly, or monthly doors knocked and phone calls made, always tying back to the ultimate goal of the win number.

*As Sun Tzu wrote in [The Art of War](#):
"Strategy without tactics is the slowest route to victory.
Tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat."*

Common tactics for electoral campaigns include:

- Door knocking
- Phone banking
- Relational texting
- Mailers
- Rallies, picnics, or other public gatherings
- Op-eds / Letters to the editor
- “Traditional” media: Newspaper, TV, or radio ads
- Social media

Tactics are typically most effective when they spread your story and image and when they are specifically targeted at a group of voters based on data. They can and should also be fun!



C. BUDGET

BUDGET TEMPLATE			
CATEGORY	LINE ITEM	Base	Reach
CAMPAIGN OPERATIONS			
Admin/Ops	TOTALS	\$ -	\$ -
	Staff Salary + Payroll Tax/Fees	\$ -	\$ -
	Contractors	\$ -	\$ -
	Data	\$ -	\$ -
	Office Supplies	\$ -	\$ -
	Software	\$ -	\$ -
	Insurance	\$ -	\$ -
Fundraising	TOTALS	\$ -	\$ -
	Processing Fees	\$ -	\$ -
	Data & Software	\$ -	\$ -
	Mail solicitation/invites/remits	\$ -	\$ -
	Events	\$ -	\$ -
	Digital Ads	\$ -	\$ -
	Thank yous	\$ -	\$ -

DIRECT VOTER CONTACT			
Comms	TOTALS	\$ -	\$ -
	Polling	\$ -	\$ -
	Production / Design	\$ -	\$ -
	Newspaper	\$ -	\$ -
	Billboards	\$ -	\$ -
	TV	\$ -	\$ -
	Streaming	\$ -	\$ -
	Radio	\$ -	\$ -
	Digital	\$ -	\$ -
	Mailers	\$ -	\$ -
Field	TOTALS	\$ -	\$ -
	Field - Doorhanger	\$ -	\$ -
	Field - Paid Canvassers	\$ -	\$ -
	Field - Software / Tools	\$ -	\$ -
	Field - Events	\$ -	\$ -
	Signs - Big + Yard	\$ -	\$ -
	Misc (Newspaper, Gimmick etc...)	\$ -	\$ -
TOTAL BUDGET			
TOTAL	TOTAL	\$ -	\$ -



D. BUILDING YOUR TEAM

Based on the scale, budget, and vote goals of your campaign, you may want to find additional help! Common campaign staff roles include: Campaign Manager, Field Organizer(s), Treasurer/Finance Director, Social Media Manager, Fundraiser, Legal Counsel, other Consultants, and Volunteers. Not every campaign needs a full complement of staff, but most candidates require the assistance of at least part-time staff. Think about the win number and voter contact goals you established and, again, work backwards to determine whether you are capable of achieving those goals alone or if you need to recruit or hire additional help. Make a list of people in your community with skills that could help your campaign!



E. TARGETING

Our tactics are most effective when we use all available information to target our resources toward specific audiences. We don't want to waste money and energy trying to convince people who are never going to vote for you. We do want to focus on persuading people who might be on the fence (Persuasion) and turning out people who already support you (GOTV - Get Out The Vote). Candidates may be able to access a "voter file" of public and proprietary data from their state party or other independent providers to help with more precise targeting of voters and audiences.

LIKELIHOOD OF VOTING	High	Ignore	Persuade	Activate
	Medium	Ignore	Persuade	GOTV
	Low	Ignore	Ignore	Ignore
		Low	Medium	High

LIKELIHOOD OF SUPPORTING YOU

MESSAGING

Whether it's introducing yourself at an event, talking to people at their doors, or writing an op-ed in the local newspaper, you need a way to consistently connect with, persuade, and motivate voters. This section will help you craft your story, identify resources for understanding what is on the minds of voters, and help you get familiar with common campaign messaging and advertising tactics.



A. MESSAGE BOX

A message box is a tool to define a clear campaign message that is built on your own narrative and how you wish to portray your candidacy and campaign. The box also helps you anticipate your opponents' message and how the opposition might attempt to frame your candidacy. Fill in the boxes below.

What I say about myself	What the opposition says about themselves
What I say about the opposition	What the opposition says about me



B. THE STUMP SPEECH

Having a great stump speech and learning how to deliver it effectively is one of the most important things you will do as a candidate. Your stump speech is your friend and constant companion. Think through these core elements as you organize your pitch:

- What are the ONE or TWO impressions you want listeners to leave with?
- Have you covered the basics? Your name? Office you're running for?
- Does it have a clear introduction, middle, and ending?
- What are the core reasons why you are running for office?
- What is your connection? Why YOU? Why NOW?
- Is there an ask at the end of your speech?
- Is it under 90 seconds?

Be clear, concise, and compelling. Use the space below to organize your case, and then practice your stump speech with yourself and friends/family before taking it public.



C. DIGITAL PRESENCE

Your digital presence is a foundational tool in your toolkit as a candidate. Searching your name will be one of the first steps voters will take to get to know more about you. Controlling your digital presence allows you to share your message and platform with voters directly.

Website - Whether you build it, ask a friend to make it, or hire someone to help you, your candidate website should include these basic elements:

- What position you are running for
- Why you are running
- Your candidate platform
- A way to make a donation

Pro Tip:

Consider buying several variations of your campaign URL. You can redirect to your main URL from common variations (ex: janesmithforhouse.com, janesmithf4house.com, janesmithforHD1.com, janesmith.com), and it keeps opponents or trolls from being able to pose as you or play tricks on you.

Social Media - Having a social media presence is a necessary evil for most jobs, businesses, and positions these days. It's the same for candidates. At the least, you will want to have a campaign Facebook and Instagram page (separate from your personal one). You may also want to consider having a Facebook Ad Manager account in order to serve paid ads for your campaign.

Pro Tip: In order to serve political ads, Facebook requires users to become “verified”. This process can take several weeks, so doing this early will help you in the long run.



D. PAID AND EARNED MEDIA

While advertising is unlikely to persuade voters who are on the fence, it is a great way to gain name recognition, stay top-of-mind for your supportive voters, and reinforce persuasive messages your voters have seen or heard elsewhere. Targeting your messages using voter data can increase the effectiveness of your advertising. Whether it's sending a persuasive message to swing voters, or reminding your supporters to vote, getting the right message to the right audience at the right time is the key to making the most of your campaign advertising.

Digital Advertising can be easily changed or edited and optimized for specific audiences. Tracked results, like clicked links or number of views can let you know where, when, and for who spending your advertising budget is working best. Examples of digital advertising include Facebook ads, digital newspaper ads, and Google Ad Words.

Traditional Advertising tactics are oldies but goodies! Examples of traditional advertising include newspaper ads, radio spots, billboards, lawn signs, and banners.

Pro Tip: Tracking results can be possible with traditional advertising as well. You can get creative with UTM codes and unique URLs on physical advertising can help you understand whether these ad placements are getting you results.

Earned Media is when your messages are published without having to spend money to disseminate them. Earned media can be one of the best ways to earn trust from voters and influencers, increase your influence on topics that are important to your campaign, and even maximize a small communications budget. Examples of earned media include quotes in the newspaper, op-eds or letters to the editor, interviews.

Pro Tip: Some ways to increase the likelihood of capturing earned media include building relationships with reporters, making public comment, and alerting local news outlets of newsworthy events, like a campaign kickoff.



E. UNDERSTANDING THE VOTERS

To connect with voters, you must understand what people in your community care about, how they talk about themselves, and what their top priorities are. There are a number of ways to accomplish this.

Research & Polling: Researchers are constantly trying to understand public opinion, whether for the purposes of education or on behalf of special interest groups (conservation, healthcare, business owners, etc.). Sometimes they make the results of their polls public. [University of Wyoming's Survey & Analysis Center](#) is a great place to find polling results that could help you to understand your voters.

Local News: Subscribing and following along with local news outlets is a great way to understand what's on people's minds in your area. Pay attention to Letters to the Editor, comments on articles, and who or what is making headlines.

In the space below, brainstorm what you believe to be the top priorities for voters in your community right now. Think about your stance on each issue, and be prepared to answer questions and check your own assumptions throughout the campaign.

FUNDRAISING AND COMPLIANCE

To win, you will have to raise money for your campaign. It is essential to do so efficiently, ethically, and in compliance with all legal requirements and disclosures.

As the candidate, you should set daily, weekly, and monthly goals for your fundraising calls, and plan to spend several hours a day on the phone raising money.

A. HOW TO FUNDRAISE



Develop

a system for culling lists of, contacting, tracking, following with, and thanking donors



Identify

what tools you will use to raise money (i.e., call time and events) and set goals for each



Specify

who will solicit each group of donors



Include

a timeline for solicitation and re-solicitation throughout your campaign



Present

a comprehensive yet realistic view of your fundraising potential

Start by building your friends and family list. This is a list of specific people in your personal network who, if asked, will likely be supportive of your campaign. Think about people from your work, neighborhood, school, community organizations (e.g., church, temple, Elks, Rotary), family, and more. Brainstorm at least 20 people to start your fundraising spreadsheet, and keep adding as your campaign grows!

Future Donor	Relationship	Phone	Notes
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
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9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			
13.			
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18.			
19.			
20.			





B. CONTRIBUTION LIMITS

In Wyoming, there are contribution limits on how much can be given to a political campaign depending on the type of entity making the contribution and the type of entity receiving the contribution. As a candidate, your campaign should diligently track your contributions and expenditures you receive in a spreadsheet (e.g., Google Sheets, Microsoft Excel, etc.) or political CRM program (customer relationship management, e.g., Salesforce, Pipedrive, Hubspot, etc.).

According to Wyoming statutes and the Secretary of State (see p. 8 of the [2026 Campaign Guide](#)), the current campaign contribution limits are as follows:

	To Candidate (that's you!) or Candidate's Campaign Committee	To Political Party	To Political Action Committee (PAC)
Individual may give	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · No more than \$2,500 per election* to any candidate for <u>statewide</u> office · No more than \$1,500 per election to any candidate for <u>nonstatewide</u> office W.S. 22-25-102(c)	No limit**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · There are no limits on what an individual can give to a PAC. · However, if a donor earmarks a contribution for a specific candidate, the individual limits per candidate per election apply. W.S. 22-25-102(m),(n)
Political Party Committee may give	No limit	No limit	No limit
Political Action Committee (PAC) may give	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · No limit on contributions to statewide candidates*** · No more than \$5,000 per election to any candidate for nonstatewide office W.S. 22-25-102(m)	No limit	No limit
Corporation, Union, Partnership, Professional Association or Civic, Fraternal or Religious Group	<p>Organizations are prohibited from making contributions directly to candidates and candidate committees, and to political action committees and political parties that directly coordinate with a candidate or candidate's campaign committee. However, organizations may expend funds as discussed below. These entities may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Make independent expenditures for speech expressly advocating the election or defeat of a candidate (W.S. 22-25-102(k)(i)); · Make electioneering communications pursuant to W.S. 22-25-101(c); · Bear any portion of a PAC's or political party's administrative costs or costs of soliciting contributions (W.S. 22-25-102(k)(ii)); <p>A non-profit (501)(c) organization should consult an attorney, an accountant, or the Internal Revenue Service before making contributions to an initiative or referendum drive to avoid jeopardizing its tax status. (For Independent Expenditures, see W.S. 22-25-101 and W.S. 22-25-110).</p>		

*The primary, general, and special elections are deemed separate elections.

**No limit "...provided the contributions are available to use as the appropriate party authorities choose and are not exclusively dedicated to any particular candidate. Contributions donated to political parties which are designated by the donor to be used only for a particular candidate and no other purposes are subject to the limitations..." W.S. 22-25-102(f).

***Contributions donated to a PAC which are designated by the donor to be used only for a particular candidate and no other purpose are subject to the individual contribution limitations. W.S. 22-25-102(m),(n).



C. REPORTING CONTRIBUTIONS AND EXPENDITURES

For transparency and accountability, candidates, candidate campaign committees, and PACs must file a Statement of Contributions and Expenditures (C&E report) between 7-14 days prior to each election.

The 2026 deadlines for candidates, campaign committees, PACs, and organizations to file C&E reports are:

- Primary C&E Report: File between August 6-13 for any C&E from January 1, 2025 through August 18, 2026
- General C&E Report: File between October 22-29 for any C&E from August 19 through December 31, 2026
- If you have additional C&E to report after August 13 for the primary or October 29 for the general, file an amended C&E report after election day.

Reports should be filed to the same filing office where candidates or committees originally filed; that is, County and Municipal candidates file [a paper form](#) with their County Clerk, and all other Statewide and Legislatives candidates and their associated committees should file electronically with the [Secretary of State](#).

Tips and Guidelines for Campaign Finance Reporting

From the Wyoming Secretary of State, see p. 6-7 of the [2026 Election Guide](#)

- “Fully itemize all contributions over \$100. Contributions of \$100 or more must be itemized by contributor, amount, date received, city, state, and zip code of the contributor. All contributions under \$100 shall be reported, but need not be itemized. However, if you receive \$60 from a contributor who later gives you \$50, you must itemize the total \$110 contribution. W.S. 22-25-106(a)(iv).”
- “Ticket Sales for Fundraisers: If the ticket price is \$100 or more, the name and address of each ticket purchaser and purchase price of ticket(s) must be itemized under “contributions.” If the ticket price is under \$100, the fundraiser does not have to be itemized and can be reported under “unitemized contributions.””
- “Anonymous contributions are contributions whose origin cannot be determined, i.e., “pass the hat” contributions. “Anonymous contribution” does not mean that an individual may contribute to a candidate with the understanding the contributor’s name will not be reported. The campaign reporting forms have a specific section to record anonymous contributions where the candidate attests that he/she does not know the origin of the contribution.”

- “Contributions also include donations of any items of value, services, or election assistance provided for a candidate. These **“in-kind” contributions** must be itemized by name, city and state of the contributor, date, item or service donated, and estimated value of the donated item or service, and are subject to the same contribution limits for the respective office.”
- **“Each expenditure must be itemized** by *date* expended, name, city and state of the person or business to which the expenditure is made, and the *purpose* and *amount* of the expenditure. Examples are: advertising and printing expenses, expenses for services of a campaign consultant or public relations firm, office space, etc.”
- “Campaign expenditures that are not required to be reported include: Filing fee to run for office, a candidate’s own personal campaign expenses for travel, meals, and checking account service charges. W.S. 22-25-103(b).”
- “A candidate is not required to report advertising expenses by a party central committee for the candidate if the entire slate of candidates below national level is advertised. This applies even though all candidates are not included in each advertisement, as long as the expenses for each candidate are substantially the same. W.S. 22-25-103(c).”
- “If there are additional contributions and expenditures after a report has been filed, an amendment to the report must be filed. Amendments to filed reports must be made within 30 days from the time an error or additional contributions and expenditures become known. Net changes amounting to less than \$200 do not need to be reported. W.S. 22-25-106(e).”
- **Federal Candidates & PACs:** Candidates for U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives, candidate campaign committees and PACs supporting candidates for federal offices are required to file with the Federal Election Commission (FEC), 1050 First Street, NE, Washington, D.C., 20463. FEC’s toll-free telephone number is (800) 424-9530 and the website address is <http://www.fec.gov/>.

CIVIC OPPORTUNITIES ROADMAP



YOUR CIVIC ROADMAP

Long-term (2-5 years)

Goal:

Action:

Intermediate (6 mo-1 yr)

Goal:

Action:

Short-term (1-2 months)

Goal:

Action:

You are here

Goal:

Action:



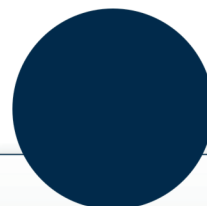
ANTICIPATED
HAZARDS



VEHICLE FOR CHANGE



Who else is on the journey with you? (community)



What lies on the road ahead? (state of the world)



What fuels you? (motivation)



What keeps you rolling? (values)



CAMPAIGN RESOURCES:

Please let ESPC know about other local resources to add here in our future editions of this booklet.
info@equalitystate.org



Mountain Movement Strategies win campaigns, develops grassroots leaders, and supports groups and coalitions making Wyoming work for the next generation.

www.mtnmvt.com



Aspira Public Affairs provide a bridge between strategy and execution to meet your community affairs objectives. Services include media relations, political candidate consulting, constituent services development, community outreach, and leadership training.

www.aspirainpires.com

From National Public Radio:

“How to Run for Office”

(26-minute listen)

[https://](https://www.npr.org/2019/10/15/770332855/how-to-run-for-office)

www.npr.org/2019/10/15/770332855/how-to-run-for-office



She Should Run is a national, nonpartisan organization activating women to be effective political participants and igniting women’s leadership in communities across the country. www.sheshouldrun.org



Leadership Institute is a national organization that offers an array of training opportunities to learn strategies and skills that lead to success for conservative principles.

www.leadershipinstitute.org

RUN FOR SOMETHING

Run For Something is a national organization who recruits and supports young progressives. www.runforsomething.net

RUN FOR OFFICE

Run For Office is a free, nonpartisan resource, proudly serving first-time candidates - and the partners who serve them - since 2016.

www.runforoffice.org

Equality State Policy Center does not endorse any of these resources.

The redesign of our *Run Wyoming Training Booklet* was compiled by Mountain Movement Strategies in 2024. Ongoing updates are managed by Equality State Policy Center.

