

Political Party Qualification

Qualifying a Political Party

Groups desiring to qualify a new political party in Hawaii for election ballot purposes must file a petition with the chief election officer.

Petition

To request a petition, an *Application for Petition to Qualify a Political Party* must be submitted to the Office of Elections. Application forms are available through the Office of Elections at www.elections.hawaii.gov. Upon receipt of the completed application the Office of Elections will issue the petition.

The petition must contain **707** signatures of currently registered voters in the State of Hawaii. This constitutes not less than one-tenth of one percent of the total registered voters of the state as of the last preceding general election.¹

Withdrawal of Signatures

A voter may withdraw his/her signature from a petition, as long as the petition has not been filed. A notice must be submitted to the chief election officer that includes the voter's name, Social Security Number, residence address, date of birth, and signature. The chief election officer will notify the group or individual that the signature will not be counted.

Filing Petition

The deadline to file a political party petition is **February 25, 2016, 4:30 pm**.

The petition must be accompanied by the following:

- Names and addresses of the officers of the central committee
- Names and addresses of the officers of the respective county committees
- Party rules

¹ There were 706,890 registered voters in the 2014 General Election.

Objections

An objection can be made by any political party or the chief election officer. The objection must be filed with the chief election officer no later than 4:30 pm on the 20th business day after the petition has been filed. The chief election officer may extend the objection period up to ten additional business days, if the group or persons desiring to qualify as a political party is provided with notice of extension and the reasons therefor. If no objection is raised, the petition will be approved. If an objection is made, any decision will be made no later than 4:30 pm on the 30th day after filing the objection or no later than 4:30 pm on the 100th day prior to the primary election, whichever occurs first.

Ten Year Provision

A political party having first qualified by petition under HRS §11-62 and having been qualified as a political party for three consecutive general elections by petition or meeting the vote requirements of HRS §11-61(b) shall be deemed a qualified political party for the following ten (10) year period, assuming the party continues to field candidates for office.

Qualified Political Parties

The deadline to submit party rules for qualified political parties is **Wednesday, March 16, 2016, 4:30 pm**. All amendments to party rules must be filed no later than 4:30 pm on the 30th day after their adoption. All rules and amendments must be certified by an authorized officer of the party and will be public record once filed with the Office of Elections.

The deadline to submit the names and addresses of the officers of the central committee and of the respective county committees is **Saturday, May 14, 2016, 4:30 pm**.

Qualification for the Next Election

To qualify as a political party for the next election, a party must meet one of the following:

- The party received at least ten percent (10%) of all votes cast for one of the following contests for an expired term:
 - Any statewide contest
 - U.S. Representative, District I
 - U.S. Representative, District II
- The party received at least four percent (4%) of all the votes cast for all state senate contests.
- The party received at least four percent (4%) of all the votes cast for all state representative contests.
- The party received at least two percent (2%) of all the votes cast for all state senate and state representative contests combined statewide.

If a party does not meet the qualifications, the party will be disqualified and a notice will be sent to the party by **Wednesday, March 8, 2017, 4:30 pm**. However, a party will remain qualified, if it is operating under a ten (10) year period established through compliance with the requirements of HRS §11-62(d).

For complete information, please refer to HRS §§11-6, and 11-61 through 11-65.

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