

§303. Formation of new party; organization by party enrollment

In addition to the procedure under section 302, a party whose designation was not listed on the general election ballot in the last preceding general election qualifies to participate in a primary election if it meets the requirements of subsections 1 and 2. [PL 2013, c. 131, §11 (AMD).]

1. Declaration of intent. Ten or more voters who are not enrolled in a party qualified under section 301 must file a declaration of intent to form a party with the Secretary of State between December 1st and December 30th of an even-numbered year. The declaration of intent must be on a form designed by the Secretary of State and must include:

A. The designation of the proposed party; and [PL 1985, c. 161, §6 (NEW).]

B. The names, addresses, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses and signatures of the voters who file the declaration of intent. [PL 2025, c. 397, §15 (AMD).]

[PL 2025, c. 397, §15 (AMD).]

2. Enrollment of voters. Within 5 business days after the declaration of intent required in subsection 1 is filed, the Secretary of State shall certify whether the application meets the requirements of subsection 1 and, if so, notify the applicants that they may enroll voters in the proposed party under sections 141 to 145. On or before January 2nd of the next even-numbered year following the filing of the application under subsection 1, the applicants must file a certification with the Secretary of State, on a form designed by the Secretary of State, that they have at least 5,000 voters enrolled in the proposed party. The Secretary of State shall verify the proposed party's enrollment figures within 15 business days of receiving the proposed party's certification and notify the applicants whether the proposed party has met the requirements to participate in a primary election in the subsequent even-numbered year. A determination by the Secretary of State that the party has not met these requirements may be challenged pursuant to section 303-A.

[PL 2017, c. 254, §2 (AMD); PL 2017, c. 254, §4 (AFF).]

3. Petition.

[PL 2013, c. 131, §11 (RP).]

4. Municipal caucuses. A party that has qualified under subsections 1 and 2 to participate in a primary election must conduct municipal caucuses in at least one municipality in each of the 16 counties during that election year as prescribed in Article 2. The chair of the municipal committee or a resident voter in the municipality must file a copy of the notice required by section 311, subsection 3 with the Secretary of State before 5 p.m. on March 20th.

[PL 2013, c. 131, §11 (AMD).]

5. Convention. A party that has qualified under subsections 1 and 2 to participate in a primary election must in that same year conduct the municipal caucuses under subsection 4 and hold a state convention as prescribed by Article 3, in order to have the party designation of its candidates printed on the ballot in the general election of that year. The voters who file the declaration of intent may perform the duties of the state committee under section 321, subsection 1 for the party's initial convention.

[PL 2013, c. 131, §11 (AMD).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 1985, c. 161, §6 (NEW). PL 1991, c. 466, §13 (AMD). PL 1991, c. 862, §3 (AMD). PL 1995, c. 459, §20 (AMD). PL 1997, c. 436, §44 (AMD). PL 1997, c. 581, §1 (AMD). PL 1999, c. 426, §10 (AMD). PL 1999, c. 450, §§6-9 (AMD). PL 1999, c. 790, §A22 (AMD). PL 2001, c. 310, §16 (AMD). PL 2013, c. 131, §11 (AMD). PL 2017, c. 254, §2 (AMD). PL 2017, c. 254, §4 (AFF). PL 2025, c. 397, §15 (AMD).

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