



City of Orange

City Hall
300 E. Chapman Avenue
Orange, CA 92866

RUNNING FOR LOCAL OFFICE

A Candidate's Guide to City Elections

Thank you for your interest in becoming a candidate for City of Orange City Council. The next General Municipal Election will be held November 3, 2026, for Mayor and City Council Districts 1, 4, and 6.

Elections are consolidated with the statewide general elections held in even-numbered years. Each of these offices is non-partisan. The City Clerk is the Election Official and will assist you throughout the election process.

Am I eligible?

Candidates for office in the City of Orange must be citizens of the United States and at least 18 years of age. Councilmember candidates must be Orange residents and registered voters of the respective district at the time nomination papers are issued (OMC 2.02.020). Candidates for Mayor, City Treasurer, and City Clerk must be residents and registered voters of the City of Orange.

When can I run?

The City holds elections every two years. City elections are designed so that Councilmembers' terms overlap. The Mayor is elected every two years. Councilmember Districts 1, 4, and 6 are elected every four years; these elections are scheduled in 2026, 2030, and 2034. Councilmember Districts 2, 3, and 5 are also elected every four years; these elections are scheduled in 2028, 2032, and 2036.

The City Treasurer and City Clerk are elected to serve four-year terms. These elections are scheduled in 2028, 2032, and 2036.

How do I run?

Getting Started

Review the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) [Candidate Toolkit](#) and [Campaign Disclosure Manual 2](#), which are available online at www.fppc.ca.gov. The Candidate Toolkit helps you understand the rules that ensure transparency and accountability in California elections, and the Manual provides information on campaign finance disclosure rules as required under the Political Reform Act.

Candidate Declaration

Candidates may wish to begin raising campaign funds well in advance of the beginning of the nomination period. Before beginning your campaign and start fundraising, you must declare which office you are seeking by filing a Candidate Intention Statement, [Form 501](#), with the City Clerk. Form 501 is available on the FPPC website.

A candidate who plans to raise or spend \$2,000 or more in a calendar year, *including* the candidate's personal funds, must:

- Declare their intention to run for elected office by filing a Candidate Intention Statement (Form 501)

with the City Clerk **before** receiving contributions or spending personal funds.

- Establish a campaign bank account.
- Within 10 days of receiving \$2,000 in contributions, open a campaign committee by filing a Statement of Organization (Form 410) with the Secretary of State along with a filing fee of \$50, made payable to the Secretary of State. File a *copy* of the Form 410 with the City Clerk.

Nomination Period

During the nomination period (July 13–August 7, 2026), candidates must schedule an appointment to meet with the City Clerk. You will be provided with a Candidate’s Packet containing information to assist you in your election campaign and the City Clerk will review important deadlines and regulations.

Call (714) 744-5500 to schedule your appointment. (We will begin accepting appointments July 1.)

Fundraising and Campaign Disclosure

Candidates must comply with State laws regulating campaign fundraising, recordkeeping, and campaign disclosure. Before money is raised or spent in connection with the election, the candidate and their committee treasurer should become familiar with California campaign finance and disclosure regulations, as well as the various campaign disclosure form requirements. Refer to the California Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) [Campaign Disclosure Manual 2](#) for record keeping guidelines including:

- Keep a detailed record of all expenditures and contributions of \$25 or more.
- Keep originals of canceled checks, vouchers, and invoices.
- Itemize contributions of \$100 or more including in-kind contributions.
- Never accept or spend \$100 or more in cash.

Information must be reported according to a filing schedule provided in your Candidate’s Packet during the nomination period. With the exception of Form 501 and Form 410, all campaign disclosure statements must be filed electronically. Information will be provided to you and your treasurer at the time Form 410 is filed.

The FPPC provides advice by phone by calling 1-800-275-3772 or by email at advice@fppc.ca.gov.

Statement of Economic Interests

As part of the Candidate’s Packet, each candidate will be provided a Form 700 – Statement of Economic Interests. All candidates must disclose investments and interests in real property held by the candidate on the date of filing, as well as income received during the twelve (12) months prior to the date of filing for elected office. Form 700 shall be filed online directly with the FPPC. Access will be provided when Nomination Papers are issued.

Candidate Statement

Each candidate may submit, for a cost, a 200-word Candidate Statement of Qualifications to place a brief statement in the voter’s Sample Ballot. The cost of the Candidate Statement will be calculated by the Registrar of Voter’s Office and provided by the start of the nomination period. Should a candidate decide to submit a Candidate Statement of Qualifications, the Candidate Statement and payment must be filed at the same time as the Nomination Papers.

Ballot Designation

The ballot designation appears on the official ballot under the candidate’s name. Detailed instructions describing acceptable ballot designations will be provided to candidates at the time Nomination Papers are issued.

Campaign Signs

Campaign signs may not be displayed for more than 90 days within a single calendar year. Signs are prohibited in the public right-of-way and must be removed within 10 days following the applicable election.

Refer to Orange Municipal Code Section 17.36.170 Noncommercial and Campaign Sign Regulations for details.

Does the City Council get paid?

The elected offices of Mayor and Councilmembers are part-time roles and receive compensation of \$600 per month, excluding any reimbursements for actual and necessary expenses incurred while performing official City duties. Partial insurance benefits are also provided.

The elected offices of City Clerk and City Treasurer receive a stipend of \$365 a month. These positions do not receive insurance benefits.

The information provided is general information for candidates running for the Offices of Mayor, City Council, City Treasurer, and City Clerk, and is subject to change. Please contact the City Clerk's office at (714) 744-5500 or clerkinfo@cityoforange.org with any questions.