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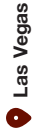
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A Smart Candidate's Guide To Nevada Election Law

Running for political office in Nevada may include handshakes and yard signs – but it should begin with the Nevada Revised Statutes. Between filing windows that close faster than a Las Vegas winter, disclosure rules that demand precision, and campaign finance reports that tolerate exactly zero “close enough” efforts, even the most well-intentioned candidates can find themselves learning election law the hard way.

ON THE
Ballot
AND
BY THE **Book**

For Nevada political offices, these requirements are administered primarily by the Nevada Secretary of State, in coordination with county clerks and, in some cases, the Nevada Commission on Ethics. If you're considering putting your name on the ballot, it helps to have a clear understanding of what the law expects along the way to avoid fines, disqualification, or reputational harm.

Candidate Qualifications and Declaration of Candidacy

Nevada law establishes baseline eligibility requirements for candidates, including age, residency, and voter registration status. Under NRS 293.1755, a person may not be a candidate for office unless he or she meets the qualifications for that office and is a qualified elector. The formal filing process is governed by NRS 293.177, which require a candidate to file a Declaration of Candidacy during the statutory filing period (generally in March of the election year).

The form and contents of the declaration are prescribed by statute and regulation. Errors in paperwork, failure to meet residency thresholds, or untimely filing can result in challenges and removal from the ballot. Nevada courts strictly enforce statutory deadlines in election matters due to the compressed timelines inherent in the election cycle.



Financial Disclosure Requirements

Candidates for certain state and local offices must file a Financial Disclosure Statement (FDS) pursuant to NRS 281.571–281.581. These statutes require disclosure of sources of income, business interests, real property, creditors, and other financial relationships. Although Nevada law does not require a candidate to disclose specific amounts associated with these categories, the overarching purpose is to promote transparency and identify potential conflicts of interest. This can become particularly tricky if a candidate is associated with or has an interest in corporate entities or family trusts.

The timing and form of filing are addressed both in statute and in regulations adopted under NAC Chapter 281. Failure to timely file an FDS may result in administrative penalties and, in some cases, disqualification from the ballot. Because the FDS becomes a public record, candidates must ensure accuracy and consistency with other public filings, including campaign finance reports.

Campaign Finance Reporting and Contribution Limits

Campaign finance compliance is governed primarily by NRS Chapter 294A. Under NRS 294A.120, a candidate must not receive contributions or make expenditures without first appointing a campaign treasurer and opening a separate campaign account. Periodic reporting of contributions and expenses is required under NRS 294A.120 and NRS 294A.210.

Contribution limits for certain state offices are set forth in NRS 294A.100, and reporting thresholds — including requirements for reporting contributions over specified amounts — are detailed in NRS 294A.120 and 294A.210. Late or last-minute contributions may trigger special reporting obligations under NRS 294A.210(4). Regulations in NAC Chapter 294A provide additional procedural guidance, including electronic filing requirements and reporting formats.

Violations can result in civil penalties imposed by the Secretary of State pursuant to NRS 294A.420. Knowing and willful violations may expose a candidate to enhanced sanctions.

Political Action Committees and Independent Expenditures

Political action committees (PACs) are regulated under NRS 294A.230 and related provisions. PACs must register, appoint officers, and file periodic contribution and expenditure reports. Independent expenditures — defined and regulated under NRS 294A.007 and 294A.280 — must be reported, and disclaimers are required on certain communications.

Improper coordination between a candidate and an entity making independent expenditures may transform what is intended to be an independent expenditure into an in-kind contribution, potentially implicating the contribution limits in NRS 294A.100. NAC Chapter 294A further clarifies reporting procedures and required disclosures.

By *Piers R. Tueller*
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Ethics and Conflicts of Interest

Nevada's ethics statutes, codified in NRS Chapter 281A, apply to public officers and candidates who are also incumbents. NRS 281A.420 governs disclosure and abstention where a public officer's private interests may be materially affected. The Nevada Commission on Ethics enforces these provisions and has adopted implementing regulations in NAC Chapter 281A.

Campaign-related conduct can intersect with official duties in ways that create risk. For example, the use of public resources for campaign purposes may violate NRS 281A.400, and failure to properly disclose conflicts may trigger investigation and penalties under NRS 281A.760.

Ballot Access and Challenges

Nevada permits challenges to a candidate's qualifications or petition signatures for ballot measures. Judicial challenges are typically brought under NRS 293.182 and related provisions. Signature requirements for independent and minor party candidates are governed by NRS 293.200 and NRS 293.1715, with form and verification procedures supplemented by NAC Chapter 293.

Courts resolve ballot challenges on an expedited basis, and deficiencies in signatures, residency, or filing compliance can result in removal from the ballot — even late in the election cycle.

Conclusion

In Nevada, a campaign is equal parts message and mechanics — and the mechanics matter. A missed deadline, an incomplete disclosure, or a reporting misstep can become an unnecessary distraction from the work of actually running a campaign. The good news is that most of these issues are entirely preventable with the right guidance. Candidates who proactively review statutory requirements, implement internal reporting controls, and seek knowledgeable legal and compliance guidance are far better positioned to focus on campaigning rather than defending against avoidable legal challenges.

If you're thinking about filing for office, partnering early with an experienced election attorney can help you navigate the process confidently, stay compliant, and keep your focus where it belongs: on winning votes, not explaining mistakes.

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