



CITY OF MORRO BAY

CITY HALL

595 Harbor Street
Morro Bay, CA 93442

RUNNING FOR LOCAL OFFICE A Candidate's Short Guide to City Elections

What elected offices can I run for?

City of Morro Bay's elected officials include the Mayor and four (4) Councilmembers. Elections are consolidated with the statewide general elections held in the even-numbered years. Each of these offices is non-partisan. Only registered voters of the City of Morro Bay can run/contend for these offices. The Mayor is elected to serve a two-year term. Councilmembers are elected to serve a four-year term.

Am I eligible?

Candidates for office in the City of Morro Bay must be citizens of the United States and at least 18 years of age. Candidates must also be registered voters of the City and reside within the City limits of the City of Morro Bay at the time nomination papers are issued.

When can I run?

The City holds elections every two years; the Mayor's seat and two Council members' seats are up for election every two years. If a seat is vacated prior to expiration of the term of office, then the Council is required to hold a special election.

City elections are designed so that Councilmember's terms overlap. The Mayor's term is filled every two years. Two Council members are filled in each election for terms of four years each; these elections are scheduled in 2016, 2020, and 2024. The other two Council member seats are filled in another election for terms of four years as well; these elections are scheduled in 2014, 2018 and 2022.

Following the passage of Measure J-14 in 2014, the City's general municipal election will be held on the same day as the statewide general election. That day is the first Tuesday after the first Monday of November in each even-numbered year.

How do I run?

FEES

There is no filing fee to run as a candidate for any of the elected offices; however, there is a cost to submit a Candidate Statement of Qualifications for the Voter's Sample Ballot. Refer to the "CANDIDATE STATEMENTS" section for more information.

CANDIDATE DECLARATION

Candidates may wish to begin raising campaign funds well in advance of the beginning of the nomination period. If so, candidates must declare their intention to run for elected office on Candidate Intention Statement (Form 501) before raising or spending any money and/or accepting a loan. This includes any expenditure by the candidate of his/her personal funds. Candidates may set up a campaign committee by filing a Statement of Organization (Form 410) and opening a bank account.

FUNDRAISING and CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE

Before money is raised or spent in connection with the election, the candidate and his/her committee treasurer should become familiar with 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: Important Information for Local Candidates. Candidates must comply with the State laws regulating campaign fundraising, recordkeeping and campaign disclosure. Candidates must disclose the source of all funds deposited into his or her campaign bank account. If the source of funds is a loan to the candidate, the name and address of the lender and the terms of the loan must also be disclosed. This information must be reported on a Campaign Statement (Form 460). Each candidate will file periodic campaign financial disclosure statements during the election cycle. The filing schedule will be provided in your Candidate's Packet. All State forms are available in the City Clerk's office, or you may visit the FPPC online at www.fppc.ca.gov for more information.

NOMINATION PAPERS

During the nomination period, candidates appear in person at the City Clerk's Office where you will be provided with a Candidate's Packet containing information to assist you in your election campaign as well as help you understand what is required of you. A representative of the candidate *may* pick up the Nomination Petition and Candidate's Packet on behalf of the candidate; however, candidates are encouraged to come in personally so that they have the opportunity of learning important information about running for office in Morro Bay.

In addition to receiving the Nomination Petition, you will also be provided with the forms necessary to comply with the requirements of the Political Reform Act, a calendar of important dates and deadlines, as well as other information regarding your duties and responsibilities of running for an elected office.

1) Who may circulate the nomination petition?

The first step in completing your Nomination Papers is to decide if you will personally be the circulator or if someone will circulate it for you. Only one person may circulate the papers; this may be the candidate or an appointed circulator. This is usually the candidate. The circulator will complete and sign the Circulator's Declaration on the back of the Nomination Petition.

2) Who may sign it?

Anyone who is an eligible, registered voter in the City of Morro Bay at the time of signing, including the circulator and the candidate, may nominate a candidate for an elected office by signing the Nomination Petition.

No voter may sign more than one Nomination Petition for the same office. If a voter signs a petition for more than one candidate for the same office, the voter's signature shall be valid on only the petition which, taken in the order they were filed, was filed first.

3) How many signatures are needed?

Twenty (20) valid signatures of registered voters are required on the Nomination Petition to qualify as a candidate; however, it is recommended that a candidate gather up to thirty (30) signatures in the event some of the signatures are determined to be invalid. Candidates are encouraged to submit their Nomination Petitions well before the deadline of the close of nomination period. A supplemental Nomination Petition may be issued if enough signatures are not determined to be valid, provided there is still sufficient time to do so before the closing date.

A signature on the Nomination Petition will be considered invalid if the San Luis Obispo County Elections Official determines that 1) the signer is not a registered voter of the City of Morro Bay; 2) the name and/or signature does not match the affidavit of registration; and/or 3) the address listed by the signer does not match what appears on the affidavit of registration.

4) Where to file?

At the City Clerk's Office, City Hall, 595 Harbor Street, Morro Bay, California 93442.

5) May Nomination Petitions be withdrawn after they are filed?

Once filed with the City Clerk's office, the Nomination Petition may be withdrawn through the deadline for the close of the Nomination Period, or the deadline of the extended Nomination Period, if applicable. Otherwise, a person who has submitted a

Nomination Petition may not withdraw as a candidate once the Nomination Period has closed.

6) When do Nomination Papers become public records?

Nomination Papers filed with the City Clerk's office are considered confidential until the nomination period closes. The papers are not released to the public until the nomination period has officially closed, at which time they become public records subject to disclosure and copying, with one exception: the Nomination Petition containing the names, addresses and signatures of voters is considered a protected document and may not be photocopied.

CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

Each candidate may submit, for a cost, a 200-word Candidate Statement of Qualifications to place a brief background statement in the voter's Sample Ballot. A deposit to cover the actual printing costs, in an amount estimated by the City Clerk's office, will be collected at the same time the Candidate Statement is filed. The deposit amount required for the 2016 election is two hundred dollars (\$200.00). Should a candidate decide to do a Candidate Statement of Qualifications, the Candidate Statement and deposit must be filed at the same time as the Nomination Papers. The candidate is entitled to a refund if the actual cost is less than the deposit. The candidate is also obligated to pay the difference should the actual cost be more than the deposit collected. A Candidate Statement cannot be changed after it is filed, but it may be withdrawn by 5:00 p.m. of the next business day after the close of the nomination period. Candidate Statements are confidential until after the close of the nomination period.

BALLOT DESIGNATION

The ballot designation appears on the official ballot under the candidate's name. Acceptable ballot designations are:

- 1) No more than three (3) words designating either the current principal profession, vocation or occupation of the candidate, or the profession, vocation, or occupation of the candidate during the calendar year immediately preceding the filing of the nomination documents, i.e. Business Person, Real Estate Agent.
- 2) Words designating the elective office the candidate holds at the time of filing the Nomination Papers to which he or she was elected by the vote of the people, i.e. Councilmember or Incumbent.

Detailed instructions will be provided to candidates at the time Nomination Papers are issued.

STATEMENTS OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS

Each candidate will be provided, as part of the Nomination Papers, a Form 700 – Statement of Economic Interests. The candidate must disclose investments and interests in real property held by the candidate on the date of filing, and income received during the twelve (12) months prior to the date of filing for the elected office. Form 700 shall be filed with the Nomination Papers in the City Clerk’s office before the nomination period closes.

ELECTION SIGNS

The requirements for Political Campaign Signs, as stated in Morro Bay Municipal Code Section 17.68.070(L) - Exceptions, reads as follows:

Political Campaign Signs. Political campaign signs are not to exceed sixty-four (64) square feet in area per site and shall be permitted only on private property.

SALARIES/BENEFITS

The elected offices of Mayor and Councilmembers are not full-time positions. Each member of the City Council receives, exclusive of any money paid as reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of official City duties, a salary of \$500.00 per month plus partial insurance benefits. The Mayor receives \$700.00 per month plus partial insurance benefits.

The information provided is general information for candidates running for the Offices of Mayor and City Council and is subject to change. For questions, please contact the City Clerk’s office at (805) 772-6205 or by email to dswanson@morrobayca.gov.