# Lewis County
# Local Voters' Pamphlet
# Administrative Rules
# for Jurisdictions

Lewis County Elections
351 N.W. North St
PO Box 29
Chehalis, WA 98532
360.740.1164

elections@lewiscountywa.gov
Website: https://elections.lewiscountywa.gov

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## Purpose

To establish uniform requirements and procedures for local jurisdictions within Lewis County included in the local voters' pamphlet for Primary, General, and Special Elections.

## Notice of Intent to Publish a Local Voters' Pamphlet (RCW 29A.32.220)

It is the intent of the Auditor's Office to publish a local voters' pamphlet for every election *beginning with the August 3, 2021 Primary* per ESHB 2421. Lewis County shall notify all jurisdictions within the county of its intent to publish a local voters' pamphlet for a primary or general election at least 90 calendar days before the publication of the local voters' pamphlet. Notification will be made via email or standard mail to the jurisdiction's contact person on file with the Elections Division of the Auditor's Office.

Local Jurisdictions shall provide the Auditor's Office with a list of all offices up for election by March 1 of each year in accordance with WAC 434-215-005.

## Inclusion in the Local Voters' Pamphlet (RCW 29A.32.220)

All jurisdictions with a race or measure on the ballot in a primary or general election in which a local voters' pamphlet is produced will participate in the local voters' pamphlet. Local jurisdictions shall include information on all jurisdictional ballot measures scheduled to appear on the ballot.

**Shared Districts:** If a local jurisdiction or office crosses the county line, the voter pamphlet statement submittal for Lewis County shall be as required by the lead county (the county where you file or submit your resolution). Only one version of voter pamphlet information need be submitted. We will obtain the information that was submitted to the lead county and include it in the Lewis County pamphlet.

## Costs Associated with the Local Voters' Pamphlet (RCW 29A.04.410, RCW 29A.32.270)

The cost of preparing a local voters' pamphlet is billed to local jurisdictions included in the pamphlet. It is prorated and charged in the same manner as other election costs. Each jurisdiction is responsible for paying its proportionate share of costs.

## Financial Hardship (RCW 29A.32.220)

The Lewis County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) has the authority to waive financial responsibility of any jurisdiction where participation in the local voters' pamphlet would create undue financial hardship. A petition from a jurisdiction must be submitted to the BOCC and a copy provided to the County Auditor Elections Department no later than 60 days before the publication of the local voters' pamphlet.

Publication of the pamphlet is defined as the date on which the County Auditor signs the final pamphlet proof and sends it to the printer.

A jurisdiction receiving a waiver for local voters' pamphlet costs will continue to be responsible for their remaining portion of the election cost.

## Content (RCW 29A.32.241, WAC 434-230-015)

The local voters' pamphlet shall include at a minimum:

1. A cover page containing the words "Official Local Voters' Pamphlet," "Lewis County," and the date of the Primary or Election.

2. A list of jurisdictions that have measures or candidates in the pamphlet. This may be in the form of a table of contents or index.

3. Information on how a person may register to vote and obtain a ballot.

4. The text of each measure and an explanatory statement prepared by the Prosecuting Attorney for any county measure or by the jurisdiction's attorney submitting the measure for any non-county measure.

5. Arguments for and against each measure if submitted by committees.

6. Statements and photos submitted by Lewis County candidates with races on the ballot.

7. For partisan primary and general elections, refer to notices specified in WAC 434-230-015.

## Submittal Process for Resolutions (RCW 29A.04.330)

Resolutions calling for an election by a jurisdiction shall be submitted on or before the resolution deadline established by state law. Resolutions calling for a special election in February or April must be submitted at least 60 calendar days prior to the election date. Resolutions calling for an election in conjunction with the Primary or General election must be submitted by the established deadlines for each election. See page **13** for resolution deadlines.

**How to submit a resolution**
To place a measure on the ballot, a resolution must be submitted to the Elections Division by the deadline.

Lewis County Auditor
Elections Department
351 NW North St
PO Box 29
Chehalis, WA 98532
elections@lewiscountywa.gov

A **Resolution Cover Sheet** is mandatory and must accompany each resolution. This cover sheet contains important contact information required by the Elections Department. See page **15** for Resolution Cover Sheet.

Upon receipt of the cover sheet and resolution, the Elections Department will send an acknowledgment notice to the jurisdiction's contact person.

## General Provisions Applicable to All Statements

**Statements**

- Microsoft Word will be used to verify word counts.
- No changes will be allowed after submission.

**Format**
Italics may be used to emphasize specific words or statements. Any other formatting, such as bold, underline, or all caps, will be changed to italics.

The use of lists or bullets is not allowed. Lists or bullets will be converted to block paragraph with a semicolon to separate each item.

**How to submit statements**
Statements must be submitted electronically in .doc, .docx, or .txt and are due on the prescribed deadline. See page **13** for deadlines

- email to: elections@lewiscountywa.gov

**Review Proofs**
A proof copy of the statement as it will appear in the local voters' pamphlet will be sent to each jurisdiction and committee for review. Only errors made by the Lewis County Auditor's Office may be corrected.

**Public Inspection of Statements (RCW 29A.32.100)**
Statements submitted for publication in the local voters' pamphlet shall not be available for release to the public until all statements pertaining to the specified ballot measure have been received and signed off by the respective jurisdiction or committee. Requests for public inspection of arguments or statements shall be made in the same manner as requests for public records.

**Contents Sole Responsibility of Authors**
The contents of explanatory statements, "For" and "Against" statements, and rebuttal statements are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not represent the position of the Auditor or Lewis County regarding the measure or of any material contained therein; neither the Auditor nor Lewis County is responsible for the validity or accuracy of the statements.

Statements should be edited and prepared as carefully as one would edit and prepare a resume. Spelling, grammar and punctuation errors will not be corrected. Statement content will be printed exactly as received, as long as it complies with format specifications.

After submittal, all statements are final and may not be amended.

## Ballot Titles for Local Measures (RCW 29A.36.071)

The official ballot for measures submitted to the voters of a city or town shall be prepared by the city or town attorney. The official ballot title for measures submitted to the voters of a local government other than a city or town (e.g., a county, fire district or school district) shall be prepared/approved by the Lewis County Prosecuting Attorney.

The format and content requirements for local measure ballot titles are very specific and must conform to state law. Each ballot title must contain the following elements:

- Identification of the enacting legislative body.
- A statement of the subject matter not exceeding 10 words in length.
- A concise description of the measure not exceeding 75 words in length.
- A question.

Resolutions submitted by jurisdictions that need a ballot title prepared by the Lewis County Prosecuting Attorney will be forwarded to that office.

Upon receipt of the final official ballot title from the Prosecuting Attorney, city attorney or town attorney, the Elections Department will notify the jurisdiction contact person and anyone else who requests a copy via letter or email.

## Ballot Title Appeal (RCW 29A.36.090)

Jurisdictions dissatisfied with the ballot title for a local measure written by the city attorney, town attorney, or Prosecuting Attorney may appeal to the Lewis County Superior Court, pursuant to RCW 29A.36.090.

## Explanatory Statement for Local Measure (RCW 29A.32.241)

Each ballot title must be accompanied by an explanatory statement. The explanatory statement is prepared by the attorney for the jurisdiction submitting the ballot measure.

The explanatory statement explains in common and neutral language the measure's purpose, the financial impact, and the laws/statutes that will be affected by the measure's passage.

If a jurisdiction does not have an approval letter or email from its attorney concerning the explanatory statement, or if a jurisdiction does not retain legal counsel, the statement shall be submitted to the Prosecuting Attorney for approval.

Explanatory statements must be **250** words or less and no more than 4 paragraphs in block paragraph form.

## Jurisdictions Shall Appoint Committees "For" and "Against" a Local Measure (RCW 29A.32.280)

For each jurisdiction measure that is included in the local voters' pamphlet, the legislative authority of that jurisdiction shall formally appoint (by the deadline) committees "For" and "Against" the measure. The "For" and "Against" Committee Member Form must be submitted by the deadline to appoint committees. (See page **16** for form.)

The jurisdiction shall appoint persons known to favor the measure to serve on the "For" committee and persons known to oppose the measure to serve on the "Against" committee.

Each committee shall consist of not more than three members; however, a committee may seek the advice of other persons.

If such persons are not immediately known, the jurisdiction is encouraged to formally notify the public that it is in search of members for the "For" and "Against" committees.

The jurisdiction is responsible for providing committee members with copies of instructions, specifications, and deadlines for all statements.

The committees are solely responsible for submitting their statements to the Elections Department in accordance with the specified timeline for that election. (See page **13** for deadlines.)

## Committee Appointments by the Auditor (RCW 29A.32.280)

If a jurisdiction fails to appoint "For" and "Against" committees by the deadline, the Auditor's Office will seek out and, whenever possible, appoint up to three members to each committee.

The Auditor's Office may, in its sole discretion, seek committee appointments through press releases, notices on the Auditor's website and any other means necessary.

The Auditor's Office will use the following criteria when making appointments:

- Have an email address and the demonstrated ability to communicate rapidly by email.
- Shall agree to work collaboratively with co-committee members.
- Must be a registered voter in the jurisdiction.

The deadline for anyone seeking committee appointment is 12:00 pm (noon) on the original "For" and "Against" statement deadline, had the jurisdiction appointed a committee. Requests must be emailed to elections@lewiscountywa.gov

Appointments will be made in the order requests from qualified applicants are received by email. Appointed committee members will be notified by email. The appointed committee must abide by the specified timelines for submitting statements for that election.

It is not the responsibility of the Auditor's Office to coordinate communications between committee members or to arbitrate disagreements among them.

The first person appointed by the Auditor's Office will be designated the "1st Committee Member" and spokesperson for the committee. If the committee is unable to agree or if multiple statements are submitted, the statement submitted by the "1st Committee Member" will be the statement printed in the local voters' pamphlet.

If a committee member wishes to withdraw, he or she must notify the Auditor's Office by email at least 24 hours prior to the submittal deadline for the statement.

## "For" and "Against" Statements

### Length

"For" and "Against" statements must be **250** words or less and no more than 4 paragraphs in block paragraph form.

If a "For" or "Against" statement is received before the deadline and exceeds the applicable word limit, the committee will be notified by email and asked to delete words,

paragraphs, or sentences. Only deletions are allowed; no changes or additions to the statement will be allowed. The shortened statement must be received by the deadline.

If the deadline has passed and the statement exceeds the 250 words limit, it will be shortened to be within the word limit.

**Format**
Up to four headings may be used to summarize and identify major arguments or paragraphs of the statement for the convenience of the reader. Headings may not exceed **15** words. Headings **are** included in the 250 statement word count.

Committee member names and, contact information will be printed in the local voters' pamphlet; but this information isn't included in the 250 word count. At least one method of contact (phone, email, website address) must be provided for print in the local voters' pamphlet.

Titles of committee members will not be published in the local voters' pamphlet.

**Rebuttal Statements**
If both "For" and "Against" statements are submitted, the Auditor's Office will email the text of the statement to the spokesperson for the opposing committee listed on the committee appointment form.

Rebuttal statements are not required; however, it gives each committee an opportunity to provide a response to the opposing statement.

The failure of a committee to submit a "For" or "Against" statement will disqualify the committee from submitting a rebuttal statement.

**Length**
Rebuttals may consist of up to **75** words. Only 1 paragraph is allowed.

If the rebuttal statement exceeds the applicable word limit, it will be shortened to be within the word limit.

**Format**
No heading may be used in rebuttal statements. Rebuttals may *not* include bold, underlining or all caps. Only italics are permitted for emphasis.

**Content**
Rebuttal statements may not interject new issues or arguments and are limited to addressing issues and arguments raised in the opposing statement. Rebuttals may contain text only. Graphs, charts, photographs, cartoons, or caricatures are not permitted.

Once submitted, the argument and rebuttal statements may not be withdrawn or changed.

## Content Rejection and Appeal Process (RCW 29A.32.230)

**Rejection**

The Auditor's Office reserves the right to reject any submission to the local voters' pamphlet, if it does not meet submission requirements, or is deemed to be libelous or otherwise inappropriate.

Material submitted for publication in the local voters' pamphlet may be rejected if:

- It's obscene.
- It's libelous.
- Contains graphs, charts, photographs, cartoons or caricatures.
- Contains a commercial advertisement.
- Contains matter prohibited by law from distribution through the mail.
- Contains matter not relevant to the measure.
- Contains matter that is otherwise inappropriate or does not comply with applicable law.
- Was received after the submittal deadline.

If an explanatory statement, "For" or "Against" statement, rebuttal statement, or contact information is rejected by the Elections Department, a written notice of rejection shall be sent to the committee spokesperson by email within 48 hours after receipt thereof and shall explain specific grounds for rejection.

The committee will have 24 hours from the time of notification to submit an adjusted statement or contact information as long as their rejected material was submitted on time.

### Appeal

The spokesperson of a rejected explanatory statement, “For” or “Against” statement, rebuttal statement, or contact information may appeal the Elections Department decision to the Lewis County Auditor. A written notice of appeal shall be submitted to the Auditor by email (elections@lewiscountywa.gov) no more than 48 hours after the notice of rejection was sent and shall explain the specific grounds for appeal. The Auditor shall issue a written decision granting or denying the appeal by email no more than 48 hours after receiving the notice of appeal. The decision of the Auditor to grant or deny an appeal shall be final.

If material is rejected, the local voters’ pamphlet will be printed with the rejected material omitted and the appropriate space left blank.

## Emergency Procedures

Only information required by law will be included in the local voters’ pamphlet in the case of an emergency. (RCW 29A.32.241)

- “Official Local Voters’ Pamphlet” on the cover, “Lewis County Elections,” and the election date
- A list of jurisdictions that have measures or candidates in the pamphlet
- Information on how a person may register and obtain a ballot
- Candidate statements and photographs
- Ballot titles and explanatory statements
- Pro/con statements
- For partisan primary elections, information on how to vote the applicable ballot format and an explanation that minor political party candidates and independent candidates will appear only on the general ballot.

## Statement Deadlines

| ELECTION DATES | February 9, 2027 | April 27, 2027 | August 3, 2027 | November 2, 2022 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Jurisdiction Responsibility and Deadlines** | | | | |
| **1. Resolution**<br>**2. Resolution Cover Sheet**<br>**3. Explanatory Statement**<br>**4. For and Against Committee Appointment** For and Against Committee Form must be completed and emailed by this date. | December 11, 2026 (same deadline for all four items) | February 26, 2027 (same deadline for all four items) | April 30, 2027 (same deadline for all four items) | August 3, 2027 (same deadline for all four items) |
| **Committee's Responsibility and Deadlines** | | | | |
| **1. Statement "For" and "Against"** Written by the committees for or against a measure | December 18, 2026 | March 5, 2027 | May 7, 2027 | August 10, 2027 |
| **2. Rebuttal Statement** | December 23, 2026 | March 10, 2027 | May 12, 2027 | August 13, 2027 |

Deadlines are 4:30 pm on each designated day.

## Statements – At a Glance

| Statement Type | Word Limit | Formatting |
|---|---|---|
| Explanatory Statement | 250 | Allowed: *Italics*<br><br>Not Allowed: **Bold,** ALL CAPS, underlining, lists, bullets |
| "For" and "Against" Statement | 250 | Allowed: *Italics*<br>Up to four headings (up to 15 words each).<br>Heading included in word count.<br>Four paragraphs.<br><br>Not Allowed: **Bold,** ALL CAPS, underlining, lists, bullets |
| Rebuttal Statement | 75 | Allowed: Italics<br>One paragraphs<br><br>Not Allowed: **Bold,** ALL CAPS, underlining, lists, Bullets |
| Contact Information | Does not count toward word limit | Allowed: Committee members names;<br>A contact phone number;<br>An email address;<br>A website.<br>**At least one method of contact (phone, Email, website address) must be provided.**<br>Not Allowed: Titles of committee members (Dr., President, Ph.D.) |

**All Statements**

Material submitted for publication in the local voters' pamphlet may be rejected if:

- It's obscene.
- It's libelous.
- Contains graphs, charts, photographs, cartoons or caricatures.
- Contains a commercial advertisement.
- Contains matter prohibited by law from distribution through the mail.
- Contains matter not limited to the measure.
- Contains matter that is otherwise inappropriate or that does not comply with applicable law.
- Was received after the submittal deadline.

# Resolution Cover Sheet

Name of District: _____

District Address: _____

Date of Election: _____

Contact Person: _____ Title: _____

Contact Phone: _____ Email: _____

2nd Contact Person: _____ Title: _____

2nd Contact Phone: _____ Email: _____

Attorney for District: _____

Attorney Phone: _____ Attorney Email: _____

Type of Election (levy, bond, lid lift, sales tax, etc.): _____

Pass/Fail requirement for this measure as determined by your legal counsel: _____

☐ Simple majority or majority 50% +1 ☐ Supermajority or 60%

Applicable statutory reference as determined by legal counsel: _____

Validation requirement as determined by your legal counsel. The minimum number of voters "required" to turnout (cast a ballot) in an excess levy or bond election.

This issue requires validation: ☐ Yes ☐ No

This form must accompany each resolution filed with Lewis County Elections. The contact person or persons should have the authority to do so and be available to answer questions.

This form may be filled out and printed.

# For/Against Committee Member Appointment Form

Name of District: _____
District Contact Name: _____
Email Address: _____Phone: _____

**Jurisdiction's responsibility:**

1. Email completed form to elections@lewiscountywa.gov by the resolution submittal deadline.
2. Provide committee members with statement submission requirements and deadlines. Committees are solely responsible for submitting voters' pamphlet statements to the Elections Division.

Deadlines are on page **13** of the administrative rules. Questions? Contact the Elections Department at: elections@lewiscountywa.gov or call 360.740.1278 or 360.740.1164

## Information for inclusion in voters' pamphlet:

### "For" Committee (1-3 members):

Committee Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____ Web: _____

Committee Member #1: _____ Email: _____

Committee Member #2: _____ Email: _____

Committee Member #3: _____ Email: _____

### "Against" Committee (1-3 members):

Committee Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____ Web: _____

Committee Member #1: _____ Email: _____

Committee Member #2: _____ Email: _____

Committee Member #3: _____ Email: _____