

**MICHIGAN ELECTION LAW (EXCERPT)**  
**Act 116 of 1954**  
PREPARATION, PRINTING AND DELIVERY OF OFFICIAL BALLOTS

**168.684 Repealed. 2017, Act 113, Eff. Oct. 25, 2017.**

**Compiler's Notes:** The repealed section pertained to preparation and adoption of vignette to be printed on official ballot.  
**Popular Name:** Election Code

**168.685 Candidate of new political party; printing name on ballot; certificate; petitions; form; circulation; disqualification and requalification of party; "principal candidate of a political party" defined; party subject to MCL 168.686a; prohibited conduct; violations; misdemeanor; felony; penalties.**

Sec. 685.

(1) The name of a candidate of a new political party must not be printed upon the official ballots of an election unless the chairperson and secretary of the state central committee of the party files with the secretary of state, not later than 4 p.m. of the one hundred-tenth day before the general November election, a certificate signed by the chairperson and secretary of the state central committee bearing the name of the party, together with petitions bearing the signatures of registered and qualified electors equal to not less than 1% of the total number of votes cast for all candidates for governor at the last election in which a governor was elected. The petitions must be signed by at least 100 registered electors in each of at least 1/2 of the congressional districts of this state. All signatures on the petitions must be obtained not more than 180 days immediately before the date of filing.

(2) After the date on which a petition is filed, the secretary of state shall not accept additional petition sheets for that petition. The validity and authenticity of the signatures may be determined in the same manner as provided for initiative and referendum petitions in section 9 of article II of the state constitution of 1963. An official declaration of the sufficiency or insufficiency of a petition filed under this section must be made by the board of state canvassers not later than 60 days before the general November election.

(3) The petitions must be in substantially the following form:

**PETITION TO FORM NEW POLITICAL PARTY**

We, the undersigned, duly registered electors of the  
city, township of ..... county of .....

(strike one)

state of Michigan, residing at the places set opposite our names, respectfully request the secretary of state, in accordance with section 685 of the Michigan election law, 1954 PA 116, MCL 168.685, to place the names of the candidates of the ..... party on the ballot at the ..... election.

Warning: A person who knowingly signs petitions to organize more than 1 new state political party, signs a petition to organize a new state political party more than once, or signs a name other than his or her own is violating the provisions of the Michigan election law.

.....  
.....  
.....

(4) The balance of the petition form must be substantially as set forth in section 544c. The size of all organizing petitions must be 8-1/2 inches by 13 inches and must be printed in the following type sizes: The words "petition to form new political party" and the name of the proposed political party must be in 24-point boldface type; the word "warning" and the language contained in the warning must be in 12-point boldface type.

(5) Petitions circulated under this section may be circulated on a countywide basis. A petition that is circulated countywide must be on a form prescribed by the secretary of state.

(6) If the principal candidate of a political party receives a vote equal to less than 1% of the total number of votes cast for the successful candidate for the office of secretary of state at the last preceding general November election in which a secretary of state was elected, that political party shall not have the name of any candidate printed on the ballots at the next ensuing general November election, and a column must not be provided on the ballots for that party. A disqualified party may again qualify and have the names of its candidates printed in a separate party column on each election ballot in the manner set forth in subsection (1) for the qualification of new parties. As used in this subsection, "principal candidate of a political party" means the candidate who receives the

greatest number of votes of all candidates of that political party for that election.

(7) A political party that complied with this section is subject to section 686a in order to have the name of that party and its candidates appear on the general election ballot.

(8) An individual shall not knowingly sign a petition to organize more than 1 new state political party or sign a petition to organize a new state political party more than once. An individual who violates this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor.

(9) An individual shall not do any of the following:

- (a) Sign a petition to form a new political party with a name other than his or her own.
- (b) Make a false statement in a certificate on a petition to form a new political party.
- (c) If not a circulator, sign a petition to form a new political party as a circulator.
- (d) Sign a name as circulator other than his or her own.

(10) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (11), an individual who violates subsection (9) is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not more than \$500.00 or imprisonment for not more than 93 days, or both.

(11) An individual shall not sign a petition to form a new political party with multiple names. An individual who violates this subsection is guilty of a felony.

(12) If an individual signs a petition to form a new political party in violation of this section, any signature by that individual on the petition is invalid and must not be counted.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955 ;-- Am. 1955, Act 271, Imd. Eff. June 30, 1955 ;-- Am. 1961, Act 223, Eff. Sept. 8, 1961 ;-- Am. 1963, 2nd Ex. Sess., Act 56, Eff. Mar. 24, 1964 ;-- Am. 1965, Act 312, Eff. Jan. 1, 1966 ;-- Am. 1973, Act 28, Imd. Eff. June 14, 1973 ;-- Am. 1976, Act 94, Imd. Eff. Apr. 22, 1976 ;-- Am. 1988, Act 116, Eff. Nov. 9, 1988 ;-- Am. 1990, Act 329, Imd. Eff. Dec. 21, 1990 ;-- Am. 2002, Act 399, Imd. Eff. May 30, 2002 ;-- Am. 2017, Act 113, Eff. Oct. 25, 2017 ;-- Am. 2018, Act 650, Imd. Eff. Dec. 28, 2018

**Constitutionality:** The Michigan supreme court, in *Socialist Workers Party v. Secretary of State*, 412 Mich. 571, 317 N.W.2d 1 (1982), held that Act No. 94 of the Public Acts of 1976, which amended this section, violates the first and fourteenth amendments and Const. 1963, Art. 1, Â§ 2 and Art. 2, Â§ 4.

**Compiler's Notes:** Section 2 of Act 116 of 1988 provides:â€œIf any portion of this amendatory act or the application of this amendatory act to any person or circumstances shall be found to be invalid by a court, the invalidity shall not affect the remaining portions or applications of this amendatory act which can be given effect without the invalid portion or application, if the remaining portions are not determined by the court to be inoperable, and to this end this amendatory act is declared to be severable.â€

**Popular Name:** Election Code

## **168.686 State convention; canvass of returns; certification of nominees; presidential and vice-presidential candidates.**

Sec. 686.

Within 24 hours after the conclusion of the state convention before a general election, the state central committee of each political party shall canvass the proceedings of the convention and determine the nominees of the convention. Not more than 1 business day after the state convention, the chairperson and secretary of the state central committee shall forward to the secretary of state, a typewritten or printed list of the names and residence, including the street address if known, of all candidates nominated at the state convention. In each presidential election year, the state central committee of each political party shall, not more than 1 business day after the state convention or the national convention of that party, whichever is later, forward to the secretary of state the typewritten or printed names of the candidates of that party for the offices of president of the United States and vice-president of the United States certified to by the chairperson and secretary of the committees. A party is not required to certify nominations made at an official primary election. The secretary of state shall forward a copy of a list received under this section to the board of election commissioners of each county, in care of the county clerk at the county seat.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955 ;-- Am. 1955, Act 271, Imd. Eff. June 30, 1955 ;-- Am. 1961, Act 223, Eff. Sept. 8, 1961 ;-- Am. 1999, Act 216, Imd. Eff. Dec. 28, 1999 ;-- Am. 2003, Act 284, Imd. Eff. Jan. 8, 2004

**Compiler's Notes:** Act 269 of 2001, which was approved by the Governor and filed with the Secretary of State on January 11, 2002, provided for the amendment of MCL 168.31, 168.73, 168.283, 168.393, 168.509y, 168.509aa, 168.561a, 168.624, 168.624a, 168.686, 168.706, 168.727, 168.737, 168.745, 168.769, 168.782b, 168.795, 168.795c, 168.797a, 168.798c, 168.799a, 168.803, 168.804, 168.842, and 168.931 of, the addition of Sec. 701 to, and the repeal of Sec. 509 of, Act 116 of 1954, known as the Michigan Election Law. A petition seeking a referendum on Act 269 of 2001 was filed with the Secretary of State. The Board of State Canvassers officially declared the sufficiency of the referendum petition on May 14, 2002. Const 1963, art 2, sec 9, provides that no law as to which the power of referendum properly has been invoked shall be effective thereafter unless approved by a majority of the electors voting thereon at the next general election. A referendum on Act 269 of 2001 was presented to the electors at the November 5, 2002, general election as Proposal 02-1, which

read as follows:â€œA REFERENDUM ON PUBLIC ACT 269 OF 2001â€”AN ACT TO AMEND CERTAIN SECTIONS OF MICHIGAN ELECTION LAWPublic Act 269 of 2001 would:â€”Eliminate â€œstraight partyâ€ vote option on partisan general election ballots.â€”Require Secretary of State to obtain training reports from local election officials.â€”Require registered voters who do not appear on registration list to show picture identification before voting a challenged ballot.â€”Require expedited canvass if presidential vote differential is under 25,000.â€”Require ballot counting equipment to screen ballots for voting errors to ensure the accurate tabulation of absentee ballots. Permit voters in polls to correct errors.â€”Provide penalties for stealing campaign signs or accepting payment for campaign work while being paid as a public employee to perform election duties.Should this law be approved?Yes \_\_\_\_\_No \_\_\_\_\_â€”Act 269 of 2001 was not approved by a majority of the electors voting thereon at the November 5, 2002, general election.

**Popular Name:** Election Code

### **168.686a Nomination by caucus or convention where no candidate polls 5% of vote cast for candidates for secretary of state.**

Sec. 686a.

(1) If a political party entitled to a position on the ballot failed to have at least 1 candidate who polled at least 5% of the total vote cast for all candidates for secretary of state at the last preceding election at which a secretary of state was elected, candidates for that political party shall be nominated as provided in section 532. County caucuses and state conventions for such political parties shall be held not later than the August primary.

(2) County caucuses may nominate candidates for the office of representative in congress, state senator, and state representative if the offices represent districts contained wholly within the county, and for all county and township offices. Not more than 1 business day after the conclusion of the caucus, the names and mailing addresses of all candidates so nominated and the offices for which they were nominated shall be certified by the chairperson and secretary of the caucus to the county clerk. The certification shall be accompanied by an affidavit of identity for each candidate named in the certificate as provided in section 558 and a separate written certificate of acceptance of nomination signed by each candidate named on the certificate. The form of the certificate of acceptance shall be prescribed by the secretary of state. If a candidate is so certified with the accompanying affidavit of identity and certificate of acceptance, the name of the candidate shall be printed on the ballot for that election. Candidates nominated and certified shall not be permitted to withdraw.

(3) The county caucus may also select the number of delegates to the state convention to which the county is entitled and shall select its own officers and name its own county committee.

(4) The state convention shall be held at the time and place indicated in the call. The convention shall consist of delegates selected by the county caucuses. The convention may fill vacancies in a delegation from qualified electors of that county present at the convention. The convention may nominate candidates for all state offices. District candidates may be nominated at district caucuses held in conjunction with the state convention attended by qualified delegates of the district. If delegates of a district are not present, a district caucus shall not be held for that district and candidates shall not be nominated for that district. Not more than 1 business day after the conclusion of the convention, the names and mailing addresses of the candidates nominated for state or district offices shall be certified by the chairperson and secretary of the state convention to the secretary of state. The certification shall be accompanied by an affidavit of identity for each candidate named in the certificate as provided in section 558 and a separate written certificate of acceptance of nomination signed by each candidate named on the certificate. The form of the certificate of acceptance shall be prescribed by the secretary of state. The names of candidates so certified with accompanying affidavit of identity and certificate of acceptance shall be printed on the ballot for the forthcoming election. Candidates so nominated and certified shall not be permitted to withdraw.

**History:** Add. 1961, Act 223, Eff. Sept. 8, 1961 ;-- Am. 1973, Act 28, Imd. Eff. June 14, 1973 ;-- Am. 1976, Act 3, Imd. Eff. Feb. 3, 1976 ;-- Am. 1988, Act 116, Eff. Nov. 9, 1988 ;-- Am. 1999, Act 216, Imd. Eff. Dec. 28, 1999

**Compiler's Notes:** Section 2 of Act 116 of 1988 provides:â€œIf any portion of this amendatory act or the application of this amendatory act to any person or circumstances shall be found to be invalid by a court, the invalidity shall not affect the remaining portions or applications of this amendatory act which can be given effect without the invalid portion or application, if the remaining portions are not determined by the court to be inoperable, and to this end this amendatory act is declared to be severable.â€”

**Popular Name:** Election Code

### **168.686b Nonmajor political party; notice of county caucus or state convention.**

Sec. 686b.

A political party that is not a major political party, as defined in section 16, and that is required to nominate candidates at a county caucus or state convention shall, at least 10 days before holding the county caucus or state convention to nominate candidates, notify in writing the secretary of state and the bureau of elections of the date, time, and location of the county caucus or state convention of that political party.

**History:** Add. 2012, Act 272, Imd. Eff. July 3, 2012

**Popular Name:** Election Code

#### **168.687 Certification of nominations by board of canvassers.**

Sec. 687.

The board of canvassers, whose duty it is to determine who are nominated for public office at any official primary election, shall forthwith, upon such determination, certify the nomination as follows:

For an office to be filled by the electors of the state at large, to the board of election commissioners of each county and to the secretary of state;

For a district office, to the board of election commissioners of each county, the whole or part of which county forms a part of the district, or to the board of election commissioners of the county, a part of which forms the district and to the secretary of state;

For a county office, to the board of election commissioners of the county; and

For a city or ward office, to the board of election commissioners of the city.

Each certificate shall set forth the name of the candidate, the office for which and the party on whose ticket he was nominated and, if for a district office, shall designate the district.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955 ;-- Am. 1955, Act 271, Imd. Eff. June 30, 1955 ;-- Am. 1961, Act 223, Eff. Sept. 8, 1961

**Popular Name:** Election Code

#### **168.688 Certificates of nomination; delivery.**

Sec. 688.

All certificates of nomination required to be made to the board of election commissioners of any county shall be delivered to the county clerk, or forwarded to him by registered or certified mail with return receipt demanded, and such county clerk shall deliver such certificate to the county board of election commissioners at its first meeting thereafter.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955 ;-- Am. 1956, Act 190, Imd. Eff. Apr. 26, 1956

**Popular Name:** Election Code

#### **168.689 Official ballots; preparation, printing.**

Sec. 689.

The board of election commissioners of each county shall prepare the official ballots for use at any state, district or county election held therein, and shall have printed a sufficient number of ballots containing the names of all candidates properly certified to said board of election commissioners, and ballots for all proposed constitutional amendments or other questions to be submitted at such election to supply each election precinct in such county with a sufficient number for such precinct, and not less than 25% more than the total number of votes cast therein at the corresponding election held 4 years previous for the office which received the greatest number of votes.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955

**Popular Name:** Election Code

#### **168.690 Official ballots; delivery to township or city clerks; duties.**

Sec. 690.

The township or city board of election commissioners for each jurisdiction conducting the election shall have the ballots required for a regular or special township, village, city, school, or community college election, or official primary election for the nomination of candidates for township, city, ward, or community college offices, to be printed and delivered to the election commission's township or city clerk at least 45 days before the election. The duties imposed upon county boards of election commissioners and upon county, township, and city clerks relative to the printing, counting, packaging, sealing, and delivery of official ballots are imposed upon the township and municipal boards of election commissioners and the township or city clerks relative to the printing, counting, packaging, sealing, and delivery of official ballots for use in each precinct of the township or city at a municipal, township, village, school, or community college election.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955 ;-- Am. 2003, Act 302, Eff. Jan. 1, 2005 ;-- Am. 2018, Act 120, Eff. Dec. 31, 2018

**Popular Name:** Election Code

#### **168.691 Official ballots; names of candidates; identification numeral; compliance.**

Sec. 691.

(1) Each board of election commissioners shall have printed on the ballot, or on ballot labels or slips to be placed on a voting machine, when used, the names of the candidates certified to that board under this act. A candidate's name shall not be placed or printed in more than 1 column on the ballot for the same office. A board of election commissioners for a county or city may arrange the ballots with an identification numeral placed in the same space with the name of each of the candidates. That identification numeral shall be rotated with the name of the candidate, and when rotated, shall appear in the same space with the same candidate regardless of where the candidate's name appears on the ballot.

(2) The name of a candidate appearing on a ballot shall comply with sections 560b and 561.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955 ;-- Am. 1955, Act 271, Imd. Eff. June 30, 1955 ;-- Am. 2002, Act 163, Imd. Eff. Apr. 9, 2002

**Popular Name:** Election Code

#### **168.692 Nomination by more than 1 party; choice; nomination for more than 1 office.**

Sec. 692.

Any person nominated at a primary election by more than 1 political party, or certified as a nominee by more than 1 political party, or nominated by 1 political party and thereafter certified as a nominee by another political party, shall be notified of such dual nominations by registered or certified mail with a return receipt demanded, by the county clerk, or clerks of the several counties affected if for a state or district office, immediately upon certification to him of such nominations by the board of canvassers or by the party committees, as the case may be. Such person shall, within 3 days after the receipt of said notification, advise the county clerk or clerks in writing in which political party column it is desired that his or her name be printed or placed on the ballots or voting machines for the ensuing election. Any person who has been certified for more than 1 office, except where 2 or more offices may be legally combined, shall be notified in a like manner and shall, within 3 days of receipt thereof, advise the county clerk or clerks of the particular office for which he desires to be a candidate.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955 ;-- Am. 1956, Act 190, Imd. Eff. Apr. 26, 1956  
**Popular Name:** Election Code

#### **168.692a Qualifying petition not to be filed by certain persons.**

Sec. 692a.

A person who files a partisan nominating petition or filing fee as a candidate of a political party, or who is nominated by a political party convention, committee, or caucus and accepts the nomination, shall not file a qualifying petition under chapter XXIVA for an office to be elected at that election or at an election held during the same calendar year.

**History:** Add. 1988, Act 116, Imd. Eff. May 2, 1988

**Compiler's Notes:** Section 2 of Act 116 of 1988 provides:“If any portion of this amendatory act or the application of this amendatory act to any person or circumstances shall be found to be invalid by a court, the invalidity shall not affect the remaining portions or applications of this amendatory act which can be given effect without the invalid portion or application, if the remaining portions are not determined by the court to be inoperable, and to this end this amendatory act is declared to be severable.”

**Popular Name:** Election Code

#### **168.693 Nomination by more than 1 party or for more than 1 office; failure to make choice; procedure.**

Sec. 693.

Any person nominated at a primary or certified as a candidate by more than 1 political party for the same office, or for more than 1 office, except where 2 or more offices may be legally combined, who fails to designate the particular office sought and the party column in which it is desired that his or her name be printed or placed on the ballots or voting machines for the ensuing election, as herein provided, shall have his or her name printed or placed on said ballots or voting machines by the proper board of election commissioners in the following manner:

(1) Should such candidate's name have been certified by more than 1 political party, it shall be printed or placed in the column of that party first making certification;

(2) Should such candidate be nominated at a primary by 1 political party pursuant to the filing of petitions and be certified as a candidate by another party for the same office, or for more than 1 office, except where 2 or more offices may be legally combined, such candidate's name shall be printed or placed on the ballots or voting machines in the party column and for that office for which petitions were filed; or

(3) Should the name of such candidate be written or placed on the primary election ballots or voting machines for the same office, or for more than 1 office, except where 2 or more offices may be legally combined, by the electors of more than 1 political party without petitions having been filed or certification made, then the name of such candidate shall be printed or placed on the ballots or voting machines for the office and in the column of that party casting the greatest number of votes for such candidate at the preceding primary election.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955

**Popular Name:** Election Code

#### **168.694 Applicability of certain sections.**

Sec. 694.

Sections 691, 692, 693, and 695 apply to all city, village, and township elections held in this state under this act, except that the notice required to be given by a candidate shall, in case of a city, village, or township office, be given by him or her to the proper city or township board of election commissioners within 2 days after his or her name is certified as nominated by 2 or more political parties for the same office.



**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955 ;-- Am. 2018, Act 120, Eff. Dec. 31, 2018  
**Popular Name:** Election Code

#### **168.695 Ineligibility of candidate at subsequent election.**

Sec. 695.

No person whose name was printed or placed on the primary ballots or voting machines as a candidate for nomination on the primary ballots of 1 political party shall be eligible as a candidate of any other political party at the election following that primary.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955  
**Popular Name:** Election Code

#### **168.696 Printing name of candidate for federal, state, district, county, and township offices on 1 ballot; placement; filing request for clarifying designation of same or similar surnames; notice of determination; appeal; printing occupation, date of birth, or residence of candidate; incumbency designation; guidelines.**

Sec. 696.

(1) The board of election commissioners in each county shall have the name of each candidate for federal, state, district, county, and township offices at an election printed on 1 ballot, separate from any other ballot. The name of each candidate of each political party must be placed under the name of the office for which the candidate was certified to have been nominated along with the political party name under the candidate's name.

(2) If, in a district that is a county or entirely within 1 county, 2 or more candidates nominated by the same political party or by different political parties for the same office, or nonpartisan candidates for the same office, have the same or similar surnames, a candidate may file a written request with the board of county election commissioners for a clarifying designation. The request must be filed not later than 3 days after the certification of the relevant candidates. Not later than 3 days after the filing of the request, the board of county election commissioners shall determine whether a similarity exists and whether a clarifying designation should be granted. In a district located in more than 1 county, the board of state canvassers shall make a determination whether to grant a clarifying designation upon the written request of a candidate who is certified by the secretary of state. The request must be filed with the board of state canvassers not later than 3 days after the board of state canvassers completes the canvass of the primary election in compliance with section 581 and the certification of nominees in compliance with section 687. The board of state canvassers shall make its determination not later than 3 days after the request is filed.

(3) In each instance, the determining board shall immediately notify each candidate for the same office as the requester that a request for a clarifying designation has been made and of the date, time, and place of the hearing. The requester and each candidate for the same office must be notified of the board's determination by first-class mail sent within 24 hours after the final date for the determination. A candidate who is dissatisfied with the determination of the board of county election commissioners may file an appeal in the circuit court of the county where the board is located. A candidate who is dissatisfied with the determination of the board of state canvassers may file an appeal in the Ingham County circuit court. The appeal must be filed within 14 days after the final date for determination by the board. The court shall hear the matter de novo. Except as provided in subsection (4), in the case of the same surname or of a final determination by the board or by the court before the latest date that the board can arrange for the ballot printing of the existence of similarity, the board shall print the occupation, date of birth, or residence of each of the candidates having the same or similar surnames on the ballot or ballot labels or slips to be placed on the voting machine, when used, under their respective names. The request may not be made by a candidate of a political party whose candidate for secretary of state received less than 10% of the total vote cast in the state for all candidates for secretary of state in the most recent November election in which a secretary of state was elected. As used in this subsection, "occupation" includes a currently held political office, even though it is not the candidate's principal occupation, but does not include reference to a previous position or occupation.

(4) If there are 2 candidates with the same or similar surnames and 1 of the candidates is entitled to an incumbency designation by section 24 of article VI of the state constitution of 1963, no other designation shall be

provided for the other candidate with the same or similar surname. If there are more than 2 candidates with the same or similar surname and 1 of the candidates is entitled to an incumbency designation by section 24 of article VI of the state constitution of 1963, a clarifying designation may be given to the other candidates with the same or similar surname. Except for an incumbency designation under section 24 of article VI of the state constitution of 1963, if 2 or more candidates with the same or similar surnames are related, the board shall only print the residence or date of birth of each of the candidates as a clarifying designation. As used in this subsection, "related" means that the candidates with the same or similar surnames are related within the third degree of consanguinity.

(5) The board of state canvassers shall issue guidelines to ensure fairness and uniformity in the granting of designations and may issue guidelines relating to what constitutes the same or similar surnames. The board of state canvassers and the boards of county election commissioners shall follow the guidelines.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955 ;-- Am. 1966, Act 328, Imd. Eff. July 19, 1966 ;-- Am. 1967, Act 36, Eff. Nov. 2, 1967 ;-- Am. 1976, Act 260, Imd. Eff. Aug. 12, 1976 ;-- Am. 2002, Act 163, Imd. Eff. Apr. 9, 2002 ;-- Am. 2017, Act 113, Eff. Oct. 25, 2017

**Compiler's Notes:** This section was also amended by Act 240 of 1964, but that act was disapproved by the voters at the November election in 1964.

**Popular Name:** Election Code

### **168.697 General November election; order of placing offices on ballot.**

Sec. 697.

At the general November election, the names of the several offices to be voted for must be placed on the ballot substantially in the following order in the years in which elections for those offices are held: Electors of President and Vice President of the United States; governor and lieutenant governor; secretary of state; attorney general; United States Senator; Representative in Congress; senator and representative in the state legislature; members of the state board of education; regents of the University of Michigan; trustees of Michigan State University; governors of Wayne State University; county executive; prosecuting attorney; sheriff; clerk; treasurer; register of deeds; mine inspector in counties electing a mine inspector; county road commissioners; drain commissioners; coroners; and surveyor. The following township officers must be placed on the same ballot as above described in substantially the following order in the year in which elections for those offices are held: supervisor, clerk, treasurer, trustees, and constables.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955 ;-- Am. 1955, Act 271, Imd. Eff. June 30, 1955 ;-- Am. 1956, Act 88, Imd. Eff. Apr. 5, 1956 ;-- Am. 1963, 2nd Ex. Sess., Act 56, Eff. Mar. 24, 1964 ;-- Am. 1965, Act 131, Imd. Eff. July 8, 1965 ;-- Am. 1966, Act 58, Imd. Eff. June 7, 1966 ;-- Am. 1976, Act 260, Imd. Eff. Aug. 12, 1976 ;-- Am. 2018, Act 226, Eff. Sept. 24, 2018

**Popular Name:** Election Code

### **168.698 Repealed. 1955, Act 271, Imd. Eff. June 30, 1955;â€”1955, Act 283, Imd. Eff. July 19, 1955.**

**Compiler's Notes:** The repealed section provided for a separate presidential ballot.

**Popular Name:** Election Code

### **168.699 Nonpartisan offices; placement on separate portion of ballot; order of listing offices.**

Sec. 699.

At any regular election, the names of the several nonpartisan offices to be voted for shall be placed on a separate portion of the ballot containing no party designation in the following order: justices of the supreme court, judges of the court of appeals, judges of the circuit court, judges of the probate court, judges of the district court, community college board of trustees member, intermediate school district board member, city officers, the following village



officers in substantially the following order in the year in which elections for the offices are held: president, clerk, treasurer, and trustees, and in a year in which an election for the office is held, local school district board member, metropolitan district officer, and district library board member.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955 ;-- Am. 1963, 2nd Ex. Sess., Act 56, Eff. Mar. 24, 1964 ;-- Am. 2004, Act 297, Imd. Eff. July 23, 2004 ;-- Am. 2005, Act 71, Imd. Eff. July 14, 2005 ;-- Am. 2012, Act 523, Eff. Mar. 28, 2013

**Compiler's Notes:** Enacting section 4 of Act 71 of 2005 provides: "Enacting section 4. If any portion of this amendatory act or the application of this amendatory act to any person or circumstances is found invalid by a court, the invalidity shall not affect the remaining portions or applications of this amendatory act that can be given effect without the invalid portion or application, if the remaining portions are not determined by the court to be inoperable, and to this end this amendatory act is declared to be severable."

**Popular Name:** Election Code

#### **168.700 Repealed. 1963, 2nd Ex. Sess., Act 56, Eff. Mar. 24, 1964.**

**Compiler's Notes:** The repealed section pertained to placement of names on ballot at biennial spring election.

**Popular Name:** Election Code

#### **168.701 Repealed. 1963, 2nd Ex. Sess., Act 56, Eff. Mar. 24, 1964.**

**Compiler's Notes:** The repealed section pertained to placement of names on ballot at biennial spring election.

**Popular Name:** Election Code

#### **168.702 Official ballots; placing of name to fill vacancy.**

Sec. 702.

The name of a candidate to fill a vacancy in any office shall be placed in the appropriate place on the ballot, regard being had to its being a state, congressional, legislative or county office.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955

**Popular Name:** Election Code

#### **168.703 Official ballots; position of parties.**

Sec. 703.

The ticket of the party having the greatest number of votes in the state at the last election in which a secretary of state was elected, as shown by the votes cast thereat for secretary of state, shall be placed first on the ballot, the position of other party tickets to be governed relatively by the same rule.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955 ;-- Am. 1963, 2nd Ex. Sess., Act 56, Eff. Mar. 24, 1964

**Popular Name:** Election Code

**168.703a Repealed. 1988, Act 116, Imd. Eff. May 2, 1988.**

**Compiler's Notes:** The repealed section pertained to listing of candidates and incumbents on official ballots.  
**Popular Name:** Election Code

**168.704 Repealed. 2018, Act 120, Eff. Dec. 31, 2018.**

**Compiler's Notes:** The repealed section pertained to size of voting squares or circles on official ballot.  
**Popular Name:** Election Code

**168.705 Repealed. 2018, Act 120, Eff. Dec. 31, 2018.**

**Compiler's Notes:** The repealed section pertained to printing, numbering, and color of ballots.  
**Popular Name:** Election Code

**168.706 Official ballot; arrangement; basis.**

Sec. 706.

The arrangement of the ballot containing the names of candidates for office shall be prescribed by the secretary of state based upon the voting equipment being used in each county.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955 ;-- Am. 1955, Act 271, Imd. Eff. June 30, 1955 ;-- Am. 1963, 2nd Ex. Sess., Act 56, Eff. Mar. 24, 1964 ;-- Am. 1985, Act 160, Imd. Eff. Nov. 20, 1985 ;-- Am. 2012, Act 128, Imd. Eff. May 14, 2012

**Compiler's Notes:** This section was amended by Act 240 of 1964, but that act was disapproved by the voters in the November, 1964, election. Act 269 of 2001, which was approved by the Governor and filed with the Secretary of State on January 11, 2002, provided for the amendment of MCL 168.31, 168.73, 168.283, 168.393, 168.509y, 168.509aa, 168.561a, 168.624, 168.624a, 168.686, 168.706, 168.727, 168.737, 168.745, 168.769, 168.782b, 168.795, 168.795c, 168.797a, 168.798c, 168.799a, 168.803, 168.804, 168.842, and 168.931 of, the addition of Sec. 701 to, and the repeal of Sec. 509 of, Act 116 of 1954, known as the Michigan Election Law. A petition seeking a referendum on Act 269 of 2001 was filed with the Secretary of State. The Board of State Canvassers officially declared the sufficiency of the referendum petition on May 14, 2002. Const 1963, art 2, sec 9, provides that no law as to which the power of referendum properly has been invoked shall be effective thereafter unless approved by a majority of the electors voting thereon at the next general election. A referendum on Act 269 of 2001 was presented to the electors at the November 5, 2002, general election as Proposal 02-1, which read as follows: "A REFERENDUM ON PUBLIC ACT 269 OF 2001 "AN ACT TO AMEND CERTAIN SECTIONS OF MICHIGAN ELECTION LAW Public Act 269 of 2001 would: "Eliminate "straight party" vote option on partisan general election ballots. "Require Secretary of State to obtain training reports from local election officials. "Require registered voters who do not appear on registration list to show picture identification before voting a challenged ballot. "Require expedited canvass if presidential vote differential is under 25,000. "Require ballot counting equipment to screen ballots for voting errors to ensure the accurate tabulation of absentee ballots. Permit voters in polls to correct errors. "Provide penalties for stealing campaign signs or accepting payment for campaign work while being paid as a public employee to perform election duties. Should this law be approved? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ "Act 269 of 2001 was not approved by a majority of the electors voting thereon at the November 5, 2002, general election.

**Popular Name:** Election Code

**168.707 Repealed. 2012, Act 276, Eff. Aug. 16, 2012.**

**Compiler's Notes:** The repealed section pertained to certification of ballot form relating to proposed constitutional amendment or other proposition to be submitted to electors.  
**Popular Name:** Election Code

**168.708 Proposed constitutional amendment or question; statement of purpose, publication.**

Sec. 708.

The secretary of state shall duly prepare a concise statement setting forth the nature of any such proposed amendment or other proposition and shall send copies of said statement to the several daily and weekly newspapers published in the state, prior to the election, with a request that said papers give as wide publicity as possible to said proposed amendment or other proposition. Publication of any matter by any paper under the provisions of this section shall be without expense or cost to the state.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955

**Popular Name:** Election Code

**168.709 Repealed. 2024, Act 234, Eff. Apr. 2, 2025.**

**Compiler's Notes:** The repealed section pertained to a proposed constitutional amendment or question and the statement of purpose, copies, and posting requirements.

**168.710 Proposed constitutional amendment or question; proof copies of ballots, filing, public inspection.**

Sec. 710.

The county board of election commissioners shall place on file at the office of the county clerk, at least 58 days before any election, a proof copy of the official ballot containing the names of candidates for public office to be voted for at the election. The proof copies must be open for public inspection.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955 ;-- Am. 2022, Act 94, Imd. Eff. June 14, 2022

**Popular Name:** Election Code

**168.711 Filing and mailing proof copies of ballots; affidavit; certification; correction and printing of ballots; forwarding copy to secretary of state.**

Sec. 711.

(1) At the time of filing the proof copy of the ballot at the office of the county clerk, the county board of election commissioners shall direct the county clerk to send by first-class mail a proof copy of the official ballot to each candidate whose name appears on the ballot to the candidate's address listed on his or her affidavit of identity. If a candidate provides an email address on his or her affidavit of identity, the county clerk may also send a proof copy of the ballot to the candidate by email.

(2) The county clerk shall prepare and sign an affidavit when sending proof ballots that attests to all of the following:

- (a) Proof ballots were mailed as required.
- (b) The names of the candidates who were mailed proof ballots.
- (c) Each address to which the proof ballots were mailed.

(d) The date or dates proof ballots were mailed.

(3) The county board of election commissioners shall also direct the county clerk to send proof ballots by email to the secretary of state who shall immediately approve and certify the ballot or notify the county clerk of any correction.

(4) If a candidate desires to correct an error on the ballot, the candidate shall contact the county clerk by telephone or email with the corrections. All corrections must be received by the county clerk no later than 4 p.m. on the fifth business day after the proof copy of the ballot is mailed to each candidate as provided in subsection (1). After 4 p.m. on the fifth business day after the county clerk mails the proof copy of the ballot to each candidate as provided in subsection (1), the county clerk is authorized to begin printing the ballots.

(5) The county clerk shall email a copy of the corrected ballot to the secretary of state.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955 ;-- Am. 1956, Act 190, Imd. Eff. Apr. 26, 1956 ;-- Am. 1984, Act 113, Imd. Eff. May 29, 1984 ;-- Am. 2022, Act 94, Imd. Eff. June 14, 2022

**Popular Name:** Election Code

### **168.712 Ballots; omissions or mistakes; reprinting.**

Sec. 712.

If the name of any candidate regularly certified to the board of election commissioners is omitted from the ballots, or if it is found that a mistake has been made in the printing of the name of any candidate on the ballot, the board of election commissioners shall have the ballots reprinted with the candidate's name on the ballots.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955 ;-- Am. 2012, Act 276, Eff. Aug. 16, 2012

**Popular Name:** Election Code

### **168.713 Delivery of ballots and supplies to county clerk.**

Sec. 713.

The county board of election commissioners shall cause the ballots required for any regular or special election or official primary election in the county, wrapped and tied as required by this act, to be delivered to the county clerk at the earliest possible time after the approval of the proof of the ballots, and absent voter ballots shall be delivered to the county clerk at least 47 days before any election or primary election. All other ballots and election supplies shall be delivered to the county clerk at least 12 days before any election or primary election.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955 ;-- Am. 1956, Act 171, Imd. Eff. Apr. 16, 1956 ;-- Am. 1990, Act 7, Imd. Eff. Feb. 12, 1990 ;-- Am. 2010, Act 51, Imd. Eff. Apr. 22, 2010

**Popular Name:** Election Code

### **168.714 Delivery of ballots and supplies to township and city clerks; receipt of delivery; deadlines.**

Sec. 714.

(1) The county clerk of each county, at the earliest possible time and at least 45 days before a regular election or special election in the county, shall cause to be delivered to the clerk of each township and city in the county the absent voter ballots for each precinct.

(2) The county clerk of each county shall cause to be delivered ballots, other than absent voter ballots, and election supplies to the clerk of each township and city in the county at least 10 days before any election or primary

election.

(3) The county clerk shall take receipt from each township and city clerk for all ballots and supplies delivered to that clerk.

(4) Each city, township, and village clerk shall adhere to the deadlines provided in this section for elections in which the county does not print the ballots.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955 ;-- Am. 1956, Act 171, Imd. Eff. Apr. 16, 1956 ;-- Am. 1981, Act 61, Imd. Eff. June 5, 1981 ;-- Am. 1981, Act 127, Imd. Eff. Sept. 29, 1981 ;-- Am. 1981, Act 140, Imd. Eff. Oct. 30, 1981 ;-- Am. 1990, Act 7, Imd. Eff. Feb. 12, 1990 ;-- Am. 2010, Act 43, Imd. Eff. Mar. 31, 2010

**Popular Name:** Election Code

#### **168.715 Absent voters' and other ballots; duties of township and city clerks, delivery to voting precinct boards of election inspectors.**

Sec. 715.

It shall be the duty of county, city and township clerks to keep safeguarded all official ballots for absent voters' use. The said township or city clerk shall have the right to open the package or packages of absent voter ballots received by him for any precinct in his township or city, provided he shall receive application for absent voter ballots from any qualified elector of such precinct, but not otherwise. He shall in no case open any of the other packages of official ballots but shall keep them intact in some safe and secure place, and shall deliver them and other election supplies, together with the absent voter ballots remaining in his possession, to the chairman or some member of the board of inspectors of election of the proper precinct or precincts of his township or city, as the case may be, before 7 o'clock in the forenoon of the day of election. On delivery of said ballots to the chairman or some other member of the board of election, said clerk shall take a receipt therefor, which receipt he shall file in his office.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955

**Popular Name:** Election Code

#### **168.716 Absent voters' and other ballots; wrapping, sealing.**

Sec. 716.

The ballots of each kind for each election precinct shall be wrapped and secured in 2 separate packages. Each package shall be securely sealed with a red paper seal furnished by the secretary of state and shall bear on its wrapper the name and number of the precinct and a certificate signed by the county clerk or some member of the board of county election commissioners or his or its duly authorized agent, setting forth the number and kind of ballots in such package and that such ballots were counted, packaged and sealed by himself personally, or by his duly authorized agent.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955

**Popular Name:** Election Code

#### **168.717 Absent voters' ballots; numbering, packaging, marking.**

Sec. 717.

At least 3% of the total number of ballots of each kind to which each precinct is entitled, together with such additional number as the county clerk, upon a proper showing by the respective township or city clerks, may deem to be necessary, beginning with ballot No. 1 and including the consecutive numbers thereafter, shall be enclosed in

1 package, as many as are necessary thereof to be used for absent voters as provided by law: Provided, however, That such county clerk may deliver to each township or city clerk a sufficient number of each kind of such absent voters' ballots for each township and city in the county with numbers higher than those on any other ballots delivered to such township or city clerk, in which case the unused absent voters' ballots of such higher numbers shall remain in the possession of the clerk for contingencies, and further reference had in this act to the disposition of absent voters' ballots bearing the regular precinct numbers shall not apply to such ballots. Each package of absent voters' ballots shall be plainly marked on the outside, "Absent voters' ballots". The remainder of the ballots of each kind for such precinct shall be enclosed in a second package, sealed as above provided.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955

**Popular Name:** Election Code

**168.717a Repealed. 2018, Act 120, Eff. Dec. 31, 2018.**

**Compiler's Notes:** The repealed section pertained to absent voters' ballots.

**Popular Name:** Election Code

**168.718 Official ballots; printer, acts prohibited; instruction ballots, printing.**

Sec. 718.

It shall not be lawful for the printer of official ballots for use at any election, or any other person, to give or deliver any of said ballots to, or knowingly permit any of said ballots to be taken by, any person other than the board of election commissioners for which such ballots are being printed; or to print, or cause or permit to be printed, any ballots in any other form than the one prescribed by this act, or with any other name thereon, or with the names misspelled, or the names, devices or designs therein arranged in any other way than that authorized and directed by the said board of election commissioners; but it shall be lawful for said board of election commissioners and upon its authorization for the chairman and candidates named on the official ballots to procure any number of facsimiles thereof to be printed on red, yellow or blue paper and to circulate the same for the purpose of the instruction of voters. Said colored facsimiles shall have printed at the head the words "Instruction Ballot".

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955

**Popular Name:** Election Code

**168.719 City and township election commissions; party committees; duties; proof of ballot; public inspection.**

Sec. 719.

The election commission of each city and township shall perform those duties relative to the preparation, printing, and delivery of ballots as are required by law of the boards of county election commissioners. The duties and privileges enjoined and granted by this act upon and to the various committees of the different political organizations are prescribed for county committees in matters pertaining to any city or township election, except that it is not necessary for a county committee of a political party or organization to furnish a heading for the ballots other than to designate the name of the party or political organization that they represent. In cities and townships, the names of candidates for city or township offices must be given by the county committees of the various political organizations to the board of election commissioners of the city or township not less than 18 days before each election, but it is not necessary for any county party committee to give to the board of election commissioners the name of any candidate nominated at an official primary election. The proof of the ballot must be open to public inspection at the office of the township or city clerk not less than 15 days before the election.



**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955 ;-- Am. 2017, Act 113, Eff. Oct. 25, 2017 ;-- Am. 2018, Act 120, Eff. Dec. 31, 2018 ;-- Am. 2022, Act 104, Imd. Eff. June 16, 2022

**Popular Name:** Election Code