



**Elections
Ontario**

Candidate Name Appearance Policy

Office of the Chief Electoral Officer
Elections Ontario
September 2024

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Document History

Revision Number	Revision Date	Effective Date	Description of Changes	Approved By
1.0		Sept. 1, 2011	Original	Greg Essensa, CEO
2.0	May 2017	July 1, 2017	Revision to incorporate Bill 45 and Bill 173 changes. These include single name and ordinarily used surname.	Greg Essensa, CEO
3.0	January 2021	January 21, 2021	Technical revisions, including updated template, style and language.	Greg Essensa, CEO
3.1	August 2024	September 30, 2024	Amended due to governance changes	Greg Essensa, CEO

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Section 1: Introduction

The *Election Act* allows prospective candidates to present how they wish their ordinary name to appear on the ballot in their Candidate Nomination Paper (FO400).

To maintain a ballot standard that treats all candidates equally in terms of ballot appearance, this policy:

- 1) Ensures that the candidate name on the ballot is identifiable by the electorate.
- 2) Ensures flexibility in how candidates can present their name to electors on the ballot.
- 3) Includes information for candidates with legal single names in accordance with the *Change of Name Act*.

Section 2: Principles

- 1) **Consistency:** Ensures that the integrity of the electoral process is protected by enforcing a common set of standards and guidelines about how candidates' names appear on the ballot and on all other election-related materials, including the Elections Ontario (EO) website.
- 2) **Clarity:** Ensures that electors are clear on the identity of the various candidates on the ballot by mitigating the possibility of any ambiguity that could arise from identical or similar candidate names.
- 3) **Flexibility:** Ensures that candidates have flexibility in how they present their own name on the ballot, as well as on all other election-related materials, including EO's website.

Section 3: Scope

This policy applies to EO staff, Returning Officers (ROs), and candidates. It provides a clear understanding of:

- 1) The rules that determine how a candidate's name will appear on the ballot.
- 2) The responsibilities of EO staff and ROs for processing the Candidate Nomination Paper (F0400).
- 3) The candidate name appearance instructions for the Candidate's Guide, that will instruct candidates and their associates, on accurate completion of the Candidate Nomination Paper (F0400).

Section 4: Definitions

The following eleven definitions are referred to throughout this policy:

Candidate

A person who, once the writ is issued to call a general election or by-election, has received their Certificate of Nomination from either the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) or the RO before nominations close.

Elector

A person who is eligible to vote in an Ontario provincial election.

First Name

The name that precedes the last name.

Last Name

The name shared in common by members of a family and follows the first and middle names.

Legal Name

An individual's entire name that appears on official identification documents such as birth certificates, citizenship documents, or government-issued change of name certificates.

Middle Name

The name(s) that follows the first name and precedes the last name.

Nickname

Nicknames can include:

- a) shortened, abbreviated, or familiar forms of a first or middle name, and may also include initials.

Nicknames can be used in place of a legal first name and can take the form of additional names, or names that are used instead of a legal first name. Nicknames cannot include adjectives, descriptive words, or phrases. For example:

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Legal First/Middle Names	Acceptable Nicknames, Abbreviations or Familiar Forms
Andrew Joseph	Joe, Jose, Andy, Andy-Joe, A. J.
William	Bill, Will, Billy, Willy
Suzanne	Sue, Suze, Suzie, Anne, Annie, Ann
Kimberley	Kim, Kimber, Kimber-lee

Nomination

The process through which an individual can submit their Candidate Nomination Paper (F0400) to their local RO to become a candidate at an election during the writ period.

A prospective candidate receives a nomination to run as a candidate for an election in an electoral district after they have filed their Candidate Nomination Paper (F0400) and received their Certificate of Nomination (F0403) form. Candidates may receive their Certificate of Nomination (F0403) form from either the CEO or their delegate on writ day or from their local RO from the day nominations open until 2:00 P.M. on close of nominations.

Ordinary Name

The last name a prospective candidate wishes to have on the ballot instead of their full legal surname.

Single Name

The name an individual may legally adopt if this is part of their traditional culture. Applications to change a name to a Single Name are reviewed and approved by the Registrar General and must be accompanied by the prescribed evidence listed in the application form.

Standing Nomination

The process through which an individual can submit their Candidate Nomination Paper (F0400) to Elections Ontario Headquarters (EOHQ) to become a candidate at an election before the writ period.

Section 5: Mandatory Requirements

5.1. General Guidelines for Candidate Name Appearance

- 5.1.1 The candidate must provide their full legal name including any first name, middle name(s) and last name in the Candidate Nomination Paper (F0400).
- 5.1.2 The candidate must abide by the following legislated rules when completing and submitting their Candidate Nomination Paper (F0400) to the CEO or their local RO:
 - a) The last name shall appear in its entirety as entered in the *Candidate Name as it will appear on the Ballot* field of the Candidate Nomination Paper (F0400). On the ballot, the last name shall appear in uppercase following the first name.
 - b) On the ballot, candidates' names shall be numbered consecutively in alphabetical order of the last names, with the number preceding the name in each case. Where the last names are identical, the first name will dictate the order of appearance alphabetically. The CEO will ultimately decide the order of appearance where candidates' names are the same.
 - c) Diacritical marks, accents, other punctuations, or lowercase letters shall appear where they are part of the candidate's legal name(s).
 - d) Last names with prepositions or prefixes (such as Mc, Mac, de, d', da, etc.) will appear with spacing and punctuation as entered in the *Candidate Name as it will appear on the Ballot* field of the Candidate Nomination Paper (F0400). The default position for such lowercase letters will be uppercase (e.g., last names with "de" preposition will appear as "DE", last names with "Mc" preposition will appear as "MC").
 - e) Other alternative fonts or font sizing, including superscript and subscript, will not appear on the ballot.
 - f) Hyphenated last names will appear on the ballot in their entirety as entered in the *Candidate Name as it will appear on the Ballot* field of the Candidate Nomination Paper (F0400).

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- g) Legal single names (as outlined in the *Change of Name Act*) will be considered last names for the purpose of completing Candidate Nomination Papers (F0400) and for ballot creation.
- h) Lengthy names may be reduced in font and/or kerning between letters may be adjusted. Abbreviated first names or last names may be requested to accommodate the placement of the lengthy name in accordance with the ballot standards.
- i) No occupation, title, honour, decoration, degree, brackets, or quotation marks are permitted with a candidate's name on the ballot.

5.2. Ordinarily Used First and Last Names

- 5.2.1 At the candidate's request, a nickname, or an abbreviation, or familiar form of a first or last name may be used instead of their legal first or last name.
- 5.2.2 In the case of ordinarily used last names, if a candidate files their Candidate Nomination Paper (F0400) at EOHQ, they will be asked to submit evidence to support their claim of an ordinarily used last name to the CEO. If a candidate files their Candidate Nomination Paper (F0400) at a returning office, they will be asked to submit evidence to support their claim to their local RO. If a candidate does not possess evidence of an ordinarily used last name, they may have three or more electors from their electoral district sign a declaration to confirm that they know the candidate by the ordinarily used last name.
- 5.2.3 Below are examples of evidence that will be accepted as proof of an ordinarily used last name. This list is not exhaustive and demonstrates the wide variety of evidence that EO will accept.

Categories and examples of evidence to support an ordinarily used last name	
Newspaper/Magazine articles	Campaign signage, flyers, promotional material
Education certificates/diplomas	Membership cards or passes
Union card/professional licence	Radio or TV interviews
Debit/Credit cards	Professional ID badges or employee cards
Professional or political social media accounts	Professional or political websites
Professional business cards	Personal or professional correspondence
Personal cheques	Invoices, bills or financial statements

5.3. Similar or Identical Candidate Names

- 5.3.1 Where a candidate's first and last names are nearly identical and likely to create the possibility of confusion with the names requested to be shown on the ballot by another candidate whose Candidate Nomination Paper (F0400) has already been submitted or certified:
- a) EOHQ staff or their local RO shall immediately communicate the facts to the candidates and to the CEO.
 - b) The CEO shall consult with the candidates in question and resolve how each name is to be shown on the ballot.
 - c) The CEO shall advise the candidate's RO how the names are to appear on the ballot by 5:00 P.M. on the same day as the close of nominations.

Section 6: Roles & Responsibilities

6.1. Chief Electoral Officer (CEO)

The CEO is responsible for:

- a) Overseeing EO's operations.
- b) Developing and implementing policies and normative documents that support EO's strategic objectives and values.
- c) Communicating any name appearance determination to the RO by 5:00 P.M. on the same day as the close of nominations.

6.2. Director, Electoral Operations

The Director, Electoral Operations is responsible for:

- a) Overseeing the operations of their business areas, including ensuring that their division follows this policy and guidelines pertaining to nicknames, name abbreviations, familiar forms of names, and any additional directives.
- b) Advising EOHQ staff and ROs on the use and acceptable forms of nicknames, initials, abbreviations, or familiar forms of first names by candidates required to certify the Candidate Nomination Paper (FO400).
- c) Determining the appearance of each candidate's name, in the case of two or more candidates requesting substantially similar names to appear on the ballot.
- d) Ensuring that this policy is integrated into applicable existing and new program development and modernization/restructuring activities.
- e) Ensuring that any information technology or records management systems tie the legal name of the candidate to the candidate name as it appears on the ballot.

6.3. Director, Compliance

The Director, Compliance is responsible for:

- a) Overseeing the operations of their business areas, including ensuring that their division follows this policy and guidelines

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pertaining to nicknames, name abbreviations, familiar forms of names, and any additional directives.

- b) Delivering quality standing nomination services to candidates.
- c) Delivering clarity to electors in terms of candidate identity.
- d) Ensuring that this policy is integrated into applicable existing and new program development and modernization/restructuring activities.
- e) Ensuring that guidelines identify and integrate:
 - The standing nomination application processes, documentation and records.
 - Standards for EOHQ staff to assess the accuracy and completeness of the Candidate Nomination Paper (F0400) for the purposes of certifying candidates.
 - Guidance for candidates to ensure accurate completion of the Candidate Nomination Paper (F0400) application form.
 - Record-keeping standards to ensure that the candidate name, as it appears on the ballot, is traceable against the records and documentations associated with the legal and financial filings for the candidate.
- f) Ensuring that any information technology or records management systems tie the legal name of the candidate to the candidate name as it appears on the ballot.

6.4. Manager, Registration and Transfer Payments

The Manager, Registration and Transfer Payments is responsible for:

- a) Ensuring EOHQ staff administering the standing nomination processes are trained and knowledgeable in their applicable responsibilities and duties under this policy.
- b) Prescribing forms for use under the *Election Act* and providing guidelines and instructions for the accurate completion of these forms.

- c) Integrating this policy into their planning and implementation activities, where applicable.
- d) Reviewing applications for the use of an ordinarily used last name for standing nominations. This includes reviewing the evidence submitted to support the claim of an ordinarily used last name.

6.5. Manager, Voting Processes and Infrastructure

The Manager, Voting Processes and Infrastructure is responsible for:

- a) Supporting ROs as they implement this policy.
- b) Prescribing forms for use under the *Election Act* and providing guidelines and instructions for the accurate completion of these forms.
- c) Advising ROs on the review of applications for the use of an ordinarily used last name for nominations filed at returning offices. This includes advising ROs on the acceptable forms of evidence that can be submitted to support the claim of an ordinarily used last name.

6.6. Returning Officers

Returning Officers are responsible for:

- a) Reviewing applications for the use of an ordinarily used last name for nominations during the writ period. This includes reviewing the evidence submitted to support the claim of an ordinarily used last name.

6.7. Staff

EO Staff are responsible for:

- a) Following directives and understanding their responsibilities pertaining to this policy.
- b) Executing their duties in respect of the policy's purposes and principles, and any guidelines or definitions that apply to the execution of their duties.

Section 7: Additional References

The following table identifies EO policies and documents that expand upon or are informed by EO's Candidate Name Appearance Policy.

Document Name	Author(s)
1. Candidate's Guide (F0405)	EO
2. Candidate Nomination Paper (F0400)	EO

Section 8: Approval

The following table shows the authorization, amendment and review dates for this policy.

Candidate Name Appearance Policy	
Authorization	 Greg Essensa Chief Electoral Officer Date: September 2, 2024
Effective Date	September 30, 2024
Date Last Amended	January 21, 2021
Date of Next Review (Once per election cycle)	August 2028
Contact Information	ceo@elections.on.ca

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