

# WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §3-5-11

## **§3-5-11. Withdrawals; filling vacancies in candidacy; publication.**

(a) A candidate who has filed a certificate of announcement and wishes to withdraw and decline to stand as a candidate for the office shall file a signed and notarized statement of withdrawal on a form provided by the Secretary of State with the same officer with whom the certificate of announcement was filed. If the notarized statement of withdrawal is received by the proper officer by the deadlines set forth in subsection (b) of this section, the candidate's withdrawal is final and his or her name shall not be certified as a candidate nor printed on any ballot. If a candidate files a notarized statement of withdrawal after the deadlines set forth in subsection (b) of this section, the candidate shall not be withdrawn and the candidate's name shall remain on the ballot.

(b) Deadlines for withdrawing as a candidate:

(1) For primary or special primary elections or nonpartisan elections held in conjunction with a primary election: The notarized statement of withdrawal must be received by the same officer with whom the certificate of announcement was filed by the close of business of that officer not later than the third Tuesday following the close of the candidate filing period.

(2) For general or special general elections or nonpartisan elections held in conjunction with a general election: The notarized statement of withdrawal must be received by the same officer with whom the certificate of announcement was filed by the close of business of that officer not later than eighty-four days before the general election.

(c) Upon request of the candidate's family, the board of ballot commissioners may remove the name of a candidate who dies before the ballots are printed. If a candidate dies after the ballots are printed but before the election, the clerk of the county commission shall give a written notice which shall be posted with the sample ballot at each precinct with the county to the following effect: "To the voter: (name) of (residence), a candidate for (office) is deceased."

(d) If after the time is closed for announcing as a candidate there is a vacancy on the ballot caused by failure of any person of a party to file for each available seat of each available office, the executive committee of the party for the political division within which such candidate was to be voted for, or its chair if the committee fails to act, may fill the vacancy and certify the candidate named to the appropriate filing officer: *Provided*, That for a delegate district or senatorial district situated entirely within a single county, the county executive committee, or its chairperson if the committee fails to act, may fill the vacancy and certify the candidate named to the appropriate filing officer. Certification of the appointment by the executive committee or its chair, the candidate's certificate of announcement, and the filing fee must be received by the appropriate filing officer as follows: For an appointment by an executive committee, no later than the second Friday following the close of filing, for an

appointment by its chair, no later than the third Tuesday following the close of filing:

*Provided, however,* That any candidate appointed to an intra-county delegate or senatorial district by a county executive committee for that district pursuant to the process and by the deadline provided in this subsection shall not be refused certification for placement on the 2022 primary election ballot for that reason. A candidate appointed to fill a vacancy on the ballot under this subsection shall have his or her name printed on the primary ballot for that party. No vacancy shall be filled after the date of the primary election, except as provided in §3-5-19 of this code.

(e) The amendments to this section enacted by the Legislature during the 2022 Regular Session shall be retrospective to January 30, 2022.