WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §3-6-3

§3-6-3. Publication of sample ballots and lists of candidates.

(a) The ballot commissioners of each county shall prepare a sample official general election ballot for all political party or nominees with no party affiliation unless those persons have actually been nominated by an independent party, nonpartisan candidates for election, if any, and all ballot issues to be voted for at the general election, according to the provisions of §3-4A-1 *et seq.* of this code, and for any ballot issue, according to the provisions of law authorizing the election.

(b) The facsimile sample general election ballot shall be published as follows:

(1) For counties in which two or more qualified newspapers publish a daily newspaper, not more than 26 nor less than 20 days preceding the general election, the ballot commissioners shall publish the sample official general election ballot as a Class I-0 legal advertisement in the two qualified daily newspapers of different political parties within the county having the largest circulation in compliance with the provisions of §59-3-1 *et seq.* of this code;

(2) For counties having no more than one daily newspaper, or having only one or more qualified newspapers which publish weekly, not more than 26 nor less than 20 days preceding the primary election, the ballot commissioners shall publish the sample official general election ballot as a Class I legal advertisement in the qualified newspaper within the county having the largest circulation in compliance with the provisions of §59-3-1 *et seq.* of this code; and

(3) Each facsimile sample ballot shall be a photographic reproduction of the official sample ballot or ballot pages and shall be printed in a size no less than 65 percent of the actual size of the ballot, at the discretion of the ballot commissioners: *Provided*, That in counties where an electronic voting system has been adopted, the facsimile sample ballot may be a photographic reproduction of the absentee ballot: *Provided, however,* That when the ballots for the precincts within the county contain different senatorial, delegate, magisterial or executive committee districts or when the ballots for precincts within a city contain different municipal wards, the facsimile shall be altered to include each of the various districts in the appropriate order. If, in order to accommodate the size of each ballot, the ballot or ballot pages must be divided onto more than one page, the arrangement and order shall be made to conform as nearly as possible to the arrangement of the ballot. The publisher of the newspaper shall submit a proof of the ballot and the arrangement to the ballot commissioners for approval prior to publication.

(c) The ballot commissioners of each county shall prepare, in the form and manner prescribed by the Secretary of State, an official list of offices and nominees for each office which will appear on the general election ballot for each political party or as nominees with no party affiliation unless those persons have actually been nominated by an independent

WV Legislature

party and, as the case may be, for the nonpartisan candidates to be voted for at the general election:

(1) All information which appears on the ballot, including instructions as to the number of candidates for whom votes may be cast for the office, any additional language which will appear on the ballot below the name of the office, any identifying information relating to the candidates, such as his or her residence and magisterial district or presidential preference. Following the names of all candidates, the list shall include the full title, text and voting positions of any issue to appear on the ballot.

(2) The order of the offices and candidates for each office and the manner of designating the parties shall be as follows:

(A) The offices shall be listed in the same order in which they appear on the ballot;

(B) The candidates within each office for which one is to be elected shall be listed in the order they appear on the ballot, from left to right or from top to bottom, as the case may be, and the candidate's political party affiliation or independent status shall be indicated by the one- or two-letter initial specifying the affiliation, placed in parenthesis to the right of the candidate's name; and

(C) The candidates within each office for which more than one is to be elected shall be arranged by political party groups in the order they appear on the ballot and the candidate's affiliation shall be indicated as provided in paragraph (B) of this subdivision.

(d) The official list of candidates and issues as provided in subsection (c) of this section shall be published as follows:

(1) For counties in which two or more qualified newspapers publish a daily newspaper, on the last day on which a newspaper is published immediately preceding the general election, the ballot commissioners shall publish the official list of nominees and issues as a Class I-0 legal advertisement in the two qualified daily newspapers of different political parties within the county having the largest circulation in compliance with the provisions of §59-3-1 *et seq.* of this code;

(2) For counties having no more than one daily paper, or having only one or more qualified newspapers which publish weekly, on the last day on which a newspaper is published immediately preceding the general election, the ballot commissioners shall publish the sample official list of nominees and issues as a Class I legal advertisement in the qualified newspaper within the county having the largest circulation in compliance with the provisions of §59-3-1 *et seq.* of this code;

(3) The publication of the official list of nominees for each party and for nonpartisan candidates shall be in single or double columns, as required to accommodate the type size requirements as follows:

WV Legislature

(A) The words “official list of nominees and issues”, the name of the county, the words “General Election” and the date of the election shall be printed in all capital letters and in bold type no smaller than 14 point; and

(B) The names of the candidates and the initial within parenthesis designating the candidate's affiliation shall be printed in all capital letters in bold type no smaller than 10 point and the residence information shall be printed in type no smaller than 10 point; and

(4) When any ballot issue is to appear on the ballot, the title of that ballot shall be printed in all capital letters in bold type no smaller than 12 point. The text of the ballot issue shall appear in no smaller than eight point type. The ballot commissioners may require the publication of the ballot issue under this subsection in the facsimile sample ballot format in lieu of the alternate format.

(e) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (c) and (d) of this section, the ballot commissioners of any county may choose to publish a facsimile sample general election ballot, instead of the official list of candidates and issues, for purposes of the last publication required before any general election.

WV Legislature