

NAME OF CANDIDATE ON BALLOT [TEC, §§ 52.031-52.034]

- A. A candidate's name shall be printed on the ballot with the given name or initials first, followed by a nickname (in quotes or parentheses), if any, followed by the surname (last name), in accordance with Subchapter B of Chapter 52 of the Texas Election Code. [TEC, 52.031(a)] However, the person preparing the ballot must print the name of candidate on the ballot as certified by the authority.
- B. A candidate may use one or more of the following in combination with his or her surname [TEC, § 52.031(b)]:
1. given name or initials of given name; or
 2. a contraction or familiar form of a given name by which the candidate is known.
 3. A suffix such as "Sr.," "Jr.," or "2nd" may be used in combination with a candidate's name. [TEC, 52.031(d)]
- C. Nickname Rules [TEC, 52.031(c)]
1. A nickname of one unhyphenated word of not more than 10 letters by which the candidate has been commonly known for at least three years preceding the election may be used in combination with a candidate's name.
 2. A nickname may be used only if the candidate executes an affidavit and files it with the application for place on ballot that the nickname complies with section 52.031(c) of the Election Code. The Secretary of State has included the nickname affidavit in the prescribed candidate application.
 3. The nickname may be set off with () or " ".
 4. The nickname may not have any political, economic, social or religious connotation or constitute a slogan.
- D. Other Rules
1. Titles or designation of office, status, or position are generally prohibited. For example, our office advises against the use of "incumbent," "Judge," "Dr.," "M.D.," "D.D.S.," "Doc," "Ph.D." [TEC, § 52.033]
 2. A married woman or widow may use in combination with her surname, if the same as her husband's surname, the given name or initials of her husband with the prefix "Mrs." [TEC, § 52.031(e)]

Examples: Married: Mrs. John Doe (husband's given name) surname)

Married but separated: Mrs. Jim Smith (husband's given name) surname)

As long as divorce is not final, she may use her husband's given name and surname. Once divorce is final, name on ballot will have to be Sue Smith, or whatever legally authorized surname she decides to use, which may also be husband's given name.
 3. Two candidates with same or similar names may use a title or description of not

Seminar Example: William "Tom" Landry - Car Salesman Tom Landry - Former Dallas Cowboys Coach
4. Candidate's name may not appear on ballot more than once on the ballot except as a candidate for (i) two or more offices that are permitted by law to be held by the same person, or (ii) the office of president or vice-president of the United States and another office. [TEC, § 52.034] If there is a dispute as to the name nickname vs. given name, please contact the Elections Division at 1-800-252-2216 for further guidance.