

CHECKLIST FOR RUNNING FOR OFFICE IN SOUTH HADLEY “A Candidate’s Guide to running for Town Election”

- Review List of **Terms Due to Expire** for listing of positions available on this year’s ballot.
- Review **Annual Town Election Calendar**. Note the last day to obtain and return nomination papers.
- Obtain **Nomination Papers**. Circulate for signatures. Be sure to submit more than the required number for certification so you do not fall short in the event of signatures not certified.

All signatures must be legible and written substantially as registered. The law allows a voter to insert or omit a middle name or initial and still have the signature deemed valid. Do not use nicknames or initials in place of full names. Married women should sign “Helen Smith” not “Mrs. John Smith.”

- Campaign Finance Activity**
State law requires an accounting of all money received or spent in the course of a political campaign. Candidates are required to submit regular campaign finance reports and to comply with the campaign finance laws and procedures. It is the responsibility of all those participating in political campaign financing in Massachusetts to become knowledgeable with the provisions of the campaign finance law and its regulations. Violations of the law carry serious penalties of fines, imprisonment or both.
- Political Signs**
It is recommended that political signs only be placed on private property with the permission of the property owner and that they be out of the right of way, and not obstruct vehicle or pedestrian traffic.

MGL Ch 87, Section 9 allows for a fine of fifty dollars for affixing a notice, sign advertisement or other thing to a tree in a public way without obtaining written permission from the Tree Warden or Highway Department in the case of a state highway.

MGL Chapter 266, Section 126 allows for not less than ten nor more than one hundred dollars, plus the cost of removing such defacement for posting banners, announcements, notices or signs on utility poles. These items can be safety hazards to vehicles and pedestrians as well as interfere with the proper operation of electric service.

Campaign Activities on Election Day

On Election Day, at the polling place, political signs must be held by a person. No signs may be put into the ground, hung on fences or put on public property.

No Campaigning, or any action intended to influence the action of a voter, **is allowed within 150 feet of the entrance door to the polling location.** Prohibited actions include: holding any campaign signs; circulating or distributing campaign materials; wearing any campaign buttons or identifying signage; soliciting a person's vote for or against a candidate or question on the ballot; or distributing stickers. Extended time talking with Election workers or other residents in the polling location after you have voted may appear to be campaigning. Vehicles displaying campaign materials are also prohibited within the 150 feet of entrance.