

The Art of the Campaign and Beyond

Filing for Office

- Know when the filing period is for your office. It is usually one week in June. You will have to visit your town or city hall and pay a small fee. Then your name, address and county/district info will be listed on the State's candidate website for each political party. Start a folder to hold the various paper items that you will be given or sent.

Getting The Word Out About You and Your Candidacy

- Ask for and accept help both large and small. Donations and time are equally valuable. Money can be used to pay for signs, mailings, palm cards, and websites. Remember to list your Fiscal Agent on all materials. You may be your own Fiscal Agent. This tells who is managing the money.
- Meet people in person in as many venues possible. These could include the library, the mall, the market, the transfer station on Saturday morning, or a free 'coffee' given by a friend or neighbor, or any other political/social event given by the various groups around the state. You or friends can also go door to door to meet people and give them your lawn signs and palm cards. Remember to smile and keep it simple.
- Ask friends and businesses to put your lawn signs in their yards and windows. Signs can also be placed in high visibility areas after you've checked with town ordinances. By law, be sure to include your fiscal agent. Make sure your signs contain your name and office large enough to be read, and no more than 6 words total. They definitely should contain your website address. Choose conservative colors such as red, white, blue, black, green.
- Mass mailings are an option if you can afford it. A simple postcard with your name and the invitation to vote for you on the appropriate day will do. You can stamp the cards yourself, or pay for a bulk rate through a mailing service.
- Paper mailings cost money but flyers can also be manually stuffed in paper boxes (not mailboxes as this is a federal law) with volunteers working in pairs (one to drive and one to stuff) just before the election. Be sure to include your name, address, phone, and email/website information on any paper handouts such as your flyers or palm cards.

- Phone banks can be manned by volunteers who can make direct calls to likely voters. You can often obtain a list of the most likely voters from the your state party headquarters for a fee.
- Radio and television can also give visibility. There are many micro-stations that would be happy to interview you, and most towns have a public access station upon which you can appear. These audio and video files can then be posted on your website.
- Debates are often sponsored by groups like the Men's Club or political groups. If you participate, be prepared by having practice sessions ahead of time with friends and colleagues. Whenever you don't know the answer to something you are asked at any time, just say so, but offer to research the issue and get back to the person doing the asking.
- Websites can contain as much information as you wish on yourself, the issues, your positions, and documentation supporting your positions as well as provide for feedback and questions from the public and a place to sign up for your mailing list. You can also list endorsements and where and when you will be meeting the public. Make sure your website is listed on your signage and on all your paper materials and is mentioned when you talk to people. A website can be updated immediately for last minute calendar items.
- Email lists can be used if they are collected ahead of time with permission. You can create an email list from your website by allowing people to sign up. You can also post on town and state web forums where discussions are taking place.
- Letters to the Editor should be written by supporters and sent out to all the appropriate newspapers. You can list those newspapers on your website as well.
- Fundraising has limits so check with your area on how much money you can raise legally. Some reporting may be necessary so be sure to file all the proper information with the State of NH. More info on this will be among the papers given to you when you file.
- Endorsements can be gained by simply filling out the numerous forms that will be sent to you from various groups around the State. Some will be partisan groups that will give you a blanket endorsement based on your support for their positions and some will be single-issue groups regarding such things as taxes, education, gambling, abortion, gay rights, or the

right to keep and bear arms. Some groups may ask you to sign a single-issue Pledge, such as CNHT's anti-broadbased tax pledge for the State of NH. Choose those that are most important to you and follow up by posting the results to your website.

- Beware of violating "COMPELLED SPEECH" laws which state that a public employee may not use his or her employer's money, time, or materials or contacts to influence political decisions. The law states:

[659:44-a Electioneering by Public Employees.](#)

[_ No public employee, as defined in RSA 273-A:1, IX, shall electioneer while in the performance of his or her official duties or use government property, including, but not limited to, telephones, facsimile machines, vehicles, and computers, for electioneering. For the purposes of this section, "electioneer" means to act in any way specifically designed to influence the vote of a voter on any question or office. Any person who violates this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.](#)

[RSA 273-A:1, IX and X read as follows:](#)

[IX. "Public employee" means any person employed by a public employer except:](#)

- [_ \(a\) Persons elected by popular vote;](#)
- [_ \(b\) Persons appointed to office by the chief executive or legislative body of the public employer;](#)
- [_ \(c\) Persons whose duties imply a confidential relationship to the public employer; or](#)
- [_ \(d\) Persons in a probationary or temporary status, or employed seasonally, irregularly or on call. For the purposes of this chapter, however, no employee shall be determined to be in a probationary status who shall have been employed for more than 12 months or who has an individual contract with his employer, nor shall any employee be determined to be in a temporary status solely by reason of the source of funding of the position in which he is employed.](#)

[_ X. "Public employer" means the state and any political subdivision thereof, the judicial branch of the state, any quasi-public corporation, council, commission, agency or authority, and the state university system.](#)

Officeholders (State) Information

Publications you will need:

- Redbook - Information about all the elections for your district and how many votes they were won by. You can go to your town library to order it or get it from the Secretary of State.
- Bluebook - Useful because it gives a blurb of each House Rep with information about them including a photo. This book is privately produced. Phone orders can be placed at 603.880.5300 or email orders at neinfo@aol.com. The price on the form is \$45.00 but depending on the time of year, may be had for less. Most of this information can be found online at each legislator's State website.
- Blackbook - This book is the "Manual of the [insert current term dates] NH General Court". If you win the primary you need to get one of these. They are hard to come by. They are usually for sale at the House Clerk's Office. It has all the committees listed where people testify and Reps listen for or against legislation. House Rules and Senate Rules are also included. It explains information such as how the clerk is appointed, who is the Vice Chair. The first order of business on a day to day basis is the prayer then The Pledge of Allegiance. Also talks about procedure as to when/where bills have to be on the schedule. You can serve only on two 'standing' committees but other than that can serve on more. This book needs to be studied from cover to cover and some of the information is online.
- Maroon Book - This is a 319-page book that contains all the current election laws and can be picked up in the Secretary of State's Office.

Did You Know? Other Tidbits...

- You are automatically elected to your County Delegation if you are elected.
- They have a list of committees also on which you might serve. This is the legislature of the County.
- There are no consequences for not showing up at a session but you should make sure you get excused by calling up the speaker's office to let him know it's personal or you are swamped at work.
- If you can't make a committee call your chairman.

- Friendship with the staff is essential. Cafe, security and secretarial, computer pools who do everything to serve the membership should be treated in a friendly but professional way. They are prohibited from enjoining political ideas. It behooves you to treat them well but on a professional basis because they trust you they will often give you bits of information that are helpful.
- The press wants your story but be careful what you say and make sure you tell them it's off the record if you don't want it printed, and if they do not abide by that rule they are in trouble. Stay on the good side of press AND staffers.
- Time limit is 4 minutes speaking before a committee and before the House it's 3 minutes. You have to compress everything into no more than that or it is not effective. All you need is one stiletto to drive your point home. You can always get a more experienced person to make your points for you. For example, the first year anyone is elected, and are a legal representative, under what circumstances do you go down to the floor and give a statement to the house? None for now. Best to observe and learn. Let the majority/minority leaders present the bill.
- Also do not submit any bills the first year. It is better to work with others to put the bill in for you and also to get a Senator to co-sponsor it with you.

What is the criteria for a piece of legislation?

- What is the need for this legislation?
- Is it or a similar law already on the books?
- Is it enforceable, is it Constitutional?
- Will it cost us money?
- A bill will also go before the fiscal committee if it regards spending. (FN)
- Keep the dialogue open even if you disagree on a bill that you are asked to support, asking all the above questions.
- When it is time to vote, you will be voting for or against the committee's recommendation. If the committee recommends a bill it will be designated by the letters OTP = Ought to Pass. If a bill is not recommended, it will be given the ITL = Inexpedient to Legislate designation. Therefore, a YES or NO vote is not always indicative of being for or against a bill depending on what the committee's recommendation was.

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