

**Candidate Information
Santa Cruz City Council
Frequently Asked Questions**

Q. Who do I contact to ask questions about the election, or to file nomination papers?

A. City Clerk Bonnie Bush at (831) 420-5035 or bbush@santacruzca.gov. Offices are located at 809 Center Street, Room 8.

Q. How many City Council seats will be placed on the March 5, 2024 ballot?

A. Four Councilmember seats – Districts 1, 2, 3, and 5. Please refer to the interactive map to see the districts. <https://www.cityofsantacruz.com/government/city-departments/city-clerk/elections/district-elections>

Q. What are the nomination period dates and hours of operation?

A. **By appointment only:** November 13, 2023 through December 8, 2023, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., and 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Q. What are the qualifications to run for City Council?

A. Section 602 of the Charter of the City of Santa Cruz states,

(a) “A person shall be eligible to be nominated for, or to hold office as a Mayor, only if such person is a registered qualified voter of this City, and shall have been for at least thirty (30) days preceding nomination or appointment, a resident of the City of Santa Cruz, or of territory annexed thereto.

(b) “A person shall be eligible to be nominated for, or to hold office as a member of the Council, only if such person is a registered qualified voter of this City, and shall have been for at least thirty (30) days preceding nomination or appointment, a resident of the district from which that person has been nominated or appointed.

Q. How many signatures are required on the nomination paper?

A. At least twenty (20) and no more than thirty (30) signatures of voters registered within your specific district.

Q. What are the hours of operation for your office?

A. Our lobby is open Monday – Thursday, from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., and 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Q. Can someone else pick up my nomination papers?

A. A potential candidate is required to schedule an appointment with the City Clerk for when they are available to pick up their own papers. However, with a letter of authorization, someone else may pick up the forms on behalf of the candidate.

Q. Does a Councilmember receive a stipend for serving on the Council?

A. Yes. Councilmembers receive \$1,710.35 per month. The Mayor receives \$3,420.69 per month. Each Councilmember receives a \$350 per month car allowance, a cellular phone stipend of \$35.00/month, a data plan stipend of \$35.00/month, and a parking permit. Health insurance is available. The City pays into the Public Employees' Retirement System.

Q. Can I run for the office of Mayor of the City of Santa Cruz?

A. The next election for Mayor will be in 2026. The Mayor is elected at-large.

Q. What days does the Council meet for regular and special meetings?

A. 2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month for regular meetings:

- Start times vary.

1st and/or 3rd Tuesday of the month for special meetings, when scheduled.

- Start times vary.

There are usually no meetings in the month of July, and typically no second meeting in December. However, special meetings can be scheduled, as needed.

Q. Is there training for new Councilmembers?

A. A Councilmembers' Handbook is included with the City Councilmember Candidate Packet. This handbook will familiarize candidates with rules of procedure for conduct of City Council business, agendas, decorum in Council meetings, duties of the presiding officer, etc.

Additionally, an orientation for new Councilmembers will be provided by the City Manager and key department heads.

Q. Where can I find access to the current California Elections Code?

A. Access is available at the following locations:

- County Law Library
- Any Public Library
- City Clerk's Office
- California website at
<https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codesTOCSelected.xhtml?tocCode=ELEC&tocTitle=+Elections+Code+-+ELEC>

Q. Where can I find information pertaining to map of precincts and index of registered voters?

A. Contact the Santa Cruz County Elections Office, 701 Ocean Street, Room 310, (831) 454-2060.

Q. When do I file a form 501 (Candidate Intention Statement)?

A. Prior to raising or spending any money. Go to <https://fppc.ca.gov/learn/campaign-rules/campaign-forms.html> or click here for the form: [Form 501](#)

Q. What are the requirements for signs?

A.1. California Code Section 5405.3 Outdoor Political Advertising – State Law – Business and Professions Code states the following:

A temporary political sign is a sign which:

- (a) Encourages a particular vote in a scheduled election.
- (b) Is placed not sooner than 90 days prior to the scheduled election (**December 6th**) and is removed within 10 days after that election (**March 15th**).
- (c) Is no larger than 32 square feet.

- (d) Has had a statement of responsibility filed with the department certifying a person who will be responsible for removing the temporary political sign and who will reimburse the department for any cost incurred to remove it.

A.2. Section 9.49.030 of the Santa Cruz Municipal Code states the following:

Noncommercial signs may be placed on public property only on public light and utility poles, kiosks and public bulletin boards as provided in this section. Signs found to violate this section may be summarily removed by anyone.

- (a) Each sign must state the name and address of the person responsible for its placement and the date of its placement.
- (b) Each sign must be capable of being removed without marring or otherwise damaging the object to which it is attached.
- (c) No sign may be affixed with glue or any other substance except tape.
- (d) No portion of a sign may protrude from the edge of the object to which it is attached.
- (e) Signs on the Pacific Garden Mall must be placed on the information kiosks designed and maintained for that purpose and not elsewhere; noncommercial banners may be installed by city employees pursuant to procedures adopted by the city council and are exempted from the requirements of subsections (a) and (d) of this section.
- (f) Signs authorized by this chapter may not exceed fourteen inches in their longest dimension.
- (g) Only one copy of a single sign may be posted on any one light or utility pole.

Q. When do I file a Form 410 (Statement of Organization Recipient Committee)?

- A. Within 10 days of raising or spending \$2,000. The original copy must be filed with the Secretary of State and a copy provided to the City Clerk.

Q. Are there special forms I need to file to disclose campaign contributions and expenditures?

- A. Yes. State Law and the City's regulations require a number of filing requirements. Please refer to the FPPC's website for Manual 2 regarding Local Candidates, the City's campaign finance regulations, and the "Important Dates for Candidates" calendar provided in the Candidate packet and on the City's website: <https://www.cityofsantacruz.com/march2024>