

Running for New Bedford Public Office in 2017

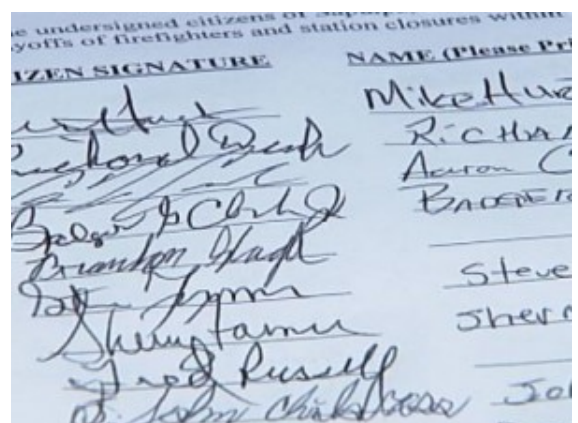
The 2017 New Bedford election cycle is upon us and the final day for potential candidates to turn in nomination papers is August 15, 2017. The process to become a candidate for a New Bedford office is simple, but there are strict requirements and timelines that must be fulfilled.

It is important that potential candidates understand the election cycle timeline, the requirements to get on the ballot, the rules established by the election commission, and the office positions available. Your number one resource is the New Bedford elections office at (508) 979-1420.

New Bedford Elections 101

Unlike state and national elections, local elections are non-partisan. This means there are no parties involved or attached to a candidate (i.e. Democrats versus Republicans).

By law, preliminary elections are held on the fourth Tuesday preceding the final city elections that will be on **November 7th, 2017**. This means that all qualified candidates are voted on by registered voters in a preliminary election on **October 3rd**. The top two finishers move on to the final municipal election on **3 November, 2017**. The winner of the Municipal Election is sworn in and serves office on **1 Jan, 2018**.



You must get at least 70 signatures to run for a New Bedford Office.

Candidate Requirements

All persons wanting to run for public office in New Bedford must fill out and submit official nomination papers to the Board of Election Commissioners. These nomination papers were made available on **May 22nd, 2017** and must be filled out completely, correctly and have signatures of at least 50 registered voters on it. My suggestion is to get at least 70 signatures. Why? Because signatures can be disallowed either in the certification process or through challenges.

Here are the rules for collecting signatures:

- The person signing must be a registered voter.
- Make sure the person signing fills out their correct name and it matches the name they used to register to vote.
- Make sure the name is legible and signed in pen.
- Make sure the signer includes their present address and not mailing addresses, like P.O. boxes.
- No nicknames or initials.
- Voters can sign for multiple candidates so don't be fooled into thinking a person can only sign for one candidate.
- Candidates running for Councilor At-Large seats can get signatures in any ward within the city. Ward candidates must get signatures from the residents in the specific ward they reside in and want to represent. New Bedford Ward maps can be found **here**.

2015 New Bedford Election Timetable

- May 22nd: Nomination papers become available at the New Bedford City Hall – First day on which nomination papers can be obtained from the office of the Board of Election

Commissioners for Mayor, School Committee, Assessor and City Council. Each candidate must sign with Board of Election Commissioners, before he/she can obtain papers. A sign up sheet will be available for individuals who wish to take out nomination papers. It will include the name, address, telephone number and office for which the person intends to be a candidate. Anyone other than a candidate must present a signed authorization from the candidate to secure papers on candidate's behalf. Each candidate will be issued five (5) nomination papers.

- Aug 15th: Last day and hour to submit nomination papers to the Board of Election Commissioners for certification of signatures. (5:00 PM)
- Oct 3rd: **Preliminary Election** (7:00 AM – 8:00 PM) – top two move on to the Municipal Election
- Nov 3rd: **Municipal Election** (7:00 AM – 8:00 PM)
- Jan 2nd, 2018: Winning candidates are sworn into office

New Bedford Elected Offices

There are a total of 16 elected offices in the New Bedford elections.

- **Mayor** – Chief executive of the city.
- **City Council** (11 Seats) – Responsible for setting the city budget and appropriating all funds to run the city. Confirms all mayoral appointments and is responsible for confirming all mayoral appointments. There are two types of city councilors; Councilors-at-Large and Ward Councilors:
 - **Councilors-at-Large** (5 seats)
 - **Ward Councilors** (Wards 1-6)
- **School Committee** (3 seats) – There are seven seats on the school committee; the mayor and six elected officials. Each serve four years and three come up for election every two years.
- **Assessor** – Determine the value of all real and personal

property located within the City of New Bedford for taxation purposes.

Important Resources:

- 2015 New Bedford Election Timetable
- 2013 New Bedford Election Results
- 2011 New Bedford Election Page
- 2011 New Bedford Election Results
- The Federal Election Commission
- Massachusetts Elections Division
- New Bedford Elections Commission

New Bedford Election Commission

City Hall, Room 114

133 William Street

New Bedford, MA 02740

Tel. : 508. 979.1421

Fax: 508. 979.1422

Hours: Mon-Thurs 8-4, Fri 8-12
