

10 Minute Supervisor Trainings



February 2024

Supervisor Elections

Conservation district supervisors serve a term of 4 years. Supervisor elections are held every two years, with three supervisors being elected one time and four the next. In the 2024 election, FOUR supervisor positions will be up for election. At the end of that term, it is time to go through the process of re-election. This 10-minute training is going to focus on the process of election, filling unexpired terms and answer some commonly asked questions.

ELECTIONS

According to KRS 262.210 supervisors must present a nominating petition to the county clerk in the county where the term is being sought. The petition is only available through the county clerk's office or on the Secretary of State's website. **The petition found on the DOC website cannot be used for this purpose.** The petition must include the signatures of at least 25 registered voters in the county, although it is recommended that you get more. This petition must be presented by the filing deadline. This year the deadline for filing is June 4, 2024. The candidate must pay the county filing fee of \$20. No district funds can be used in the filing of election petitions.

How the positions are filled depends on how many petitions are received.

- If more petitions are filed than positions are available (5 or more in 2024), the county clerk then presents them to the voters in the general election to be on the ballot.
- If only the number of petitions for the number of supervisors to be elected are filed (4 in 2024), the county clerk will certify the election of supervisors to the Soil and Water Conservation Commission without there being any supervisor names on the ballot.
- When there are not enough petitions turned in to cover the vacancies (3 or fewer in 2024), the county clerk then presents them to the voters in the general election to be on the ballot.
- When the race appears on the ballot in the general election, people can file to be a write-in candidate. Write-in candidates are physically written in on the ballot. Only certified names can be counted. To be certified as a "Write-In" you must file a declaration of intent within 10 days preceding the election (KRS 265). This year the deadline for filing is October 25, 2024. The filing fee for write-in candidates is \$50.
- A supervisor's term begins January 1st following the election. A supervisor is not qualified to take office until they have taken the oath and returned the Oath of Office card to the Division of Conservation.



VACANCIES

In the case where a supervisor must resign or a vacancy may occur, the board can nominate a citizen to fill that term. The citizen must complete a nominating petition and be approved by the Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWCC). When that term expires, that individual must file a petition to be elected.

Steps to fill a vacancy:

1. Supervisor resigns in writing with an explanation of why they can no longer serve. For other vacancies, the conservation district provides proof of why the vacancy has occurred (for example, an obituary for a supervisor who passed away).
 2. District board looks for new supervisor and approaches people to apply. The petition for filling vacancies is on DOC's website. **The petition available in the county clerk's office cannot be used for this purpose.** While the district is not legally required to advertise the open position, they should not be secretive about the process. For instance, they can put it on their Facebook page or put a notice in the newspaper. They should consider the makeup of their district and make sure they are looking for someone who will represent the district well.
 3. District reviews all petitions received and votes to recommend one person to the SWCC.
 4. District sends resignation, all petitions received, and a letter telling the commission which person they recommend to conservation@ky.gov (subject: supervisor vacancy).
 5. SWCC appoints a person to the board.
 6. Person fills out Oath of Office card and becomes a supervisor.
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POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- Supervisors must reside in the county.
- Supervisors can campaign like any other elected official.
- No district funds can be used to campaign or for the filing fee.
- Petitions will be disqualified if at least 25 signatures are not from registered voters in that county.
- Supervisors cannot hold any other elected office but can remain the board while running for an elected position.
- Names are publicly "drawn" to determine the order of appearance on the ballot.
- Supervisors are not required by law to attend a mandatory number of meetings per year, but some districts have set a limit to which they can request that a supervisor resign.
- Supervisors must take an "Oath of Office" before taking office.
- It is extremely important to have a good mix of supervisors; men, women, young and old, from different areas of the county, however, there are no specifications. The ideal supervisor is someone who cares about conserving our natural resources and can devote the time needed for monthly meetings and district functions.