



League of Women Voters

[Name of Race] Candidates Forum Format and Ground Rules

Format

The candidates will be seated in alphabetical order at a table on the stage. *[If slates, candidates sit in alphabetical order, within slates. Independents sit alphabetically at their own table.]* A trained League of Women Voters moderator from outside the voting area will stand at a lectern to the side of the candidates. The Forum has three parts:

1. *[x]-minute Opening Statement by each candidate offered in random order determined by lot before the start of the forum.*
2. *Questions from the audience.*
Questions will be written on cards, screened by the League of Women Voters to avoid duplication and ensure a broad range of topics, and read by the moderator. They may be addressed to an individual or all candidates. The moderator will instruct the audience that questions must be pertinent to the office being sought and cannot constitute a personal attack. Candidates have [x] minutes to reply. All candidates have an opportunity to answer each question, if they choose. They are not required to answer all questions.
3. *[x]-minute Closing Statements offered in random order determined by lot before the start of the forum for candidates to sum up their positions and reasons for running.*

Timekeepers, sitting in the front row of the audience, will hold up a YELLOW card when candidates have 30 seconds left and a RED card when time is up.

Ground Rules

1. Please arrive **30 minutes ahead of the program** to meet with the moderator and review the ground rules.
2. **Observe all time limits.** When the timekeeper holds up the RED card, finish your sentence and stop. Adhering to the time limits ensures fairness for all candidates.
3. During the question and answer period, limit your answer to the *[x]*-minute response time allotted. That is, there is **no second chance to rebut** on a question you have already answered. Some questions may be addressed to a specific candidate, but in every case, all candidates will have an opportunity to respond if they choose. The moderator will call on candidates in a way that ensures fairness.
4. The **moderator's decisions** on matters that arise during the Forum **are final**.
5. **Neither candidates nor their supporters/staff may photograph or record** this event or edit the official recording for use in their campaigns or for any other public application.
6. **No campaign literature** may be distributed at or outside the Forum.
7. **No cell phones, tablets, or communication devices** can be used by the candidates during the forum.