

1 committees of the political parties eligible to nominate candidates in the primary. The governing body may also
2 choose election judges from lists of individuals who submit their own names for consideration, including
3 individuals who prefer not to affiliate with a political party eligible to nominate candidates in the primary.

4 (2) The list of each party may contain more names than the number of election judges to be
5 appointed. The names of those not appointed as election judges must be given to the election administrator for
6 use in making appointments to fill vacancies.

7 (3) ~~Each board of election judges must include judges representing all parties that have submitted~~
8 ~~lists as provided in subsection (1). No more than the number of election judges needed to obtain a simple~~
9 ~~majority may be appointed from the list of one political party in each county. If any of the political parties entitled~~
10 ~~to do so fail to submit a list meeting the requirements of this section, the governing body shall, to the extent~~
11 ~~possible, appoint judges so that all parties eligible to participate in the primary are represented on each~~
12 ~~board.~~ (a) The governing body or the election administrator, if designated by the governing body, shall use the
13 list of election judges appointed by the governing body pursuant to subsection (1) to create election boards.
14 The election administrator shall ensure that each election board includes representatives of at least two political
15 parties or affiliations.

16 (b) To the extent possible, each county central committee that has submitted lists must be
17 represented on each election board, no more than the number of election judges needed to obtain a simple
18 majority may be appointed from one political party, and all parties eligible to participate in the primary must be
19 represented on each board.

20 (c) The qualifications, experience, and availability of an election judge may be considered in
21 making appointments to a specific election board.

22 (4) The election administrator shall make appointments to fill vacancies consistent with the
23 requirements of subsection (3) from the list provided for in subsection (2). ~~If the list is insufficient or if one or~~
24 ~~more of the eligible political parties fails to submit a list meeting the requirements of this section, the election~~
25 administrator may select enough people meeting the qualifications of 13-4-107 to fill election judge vacancies in
26 all precincts.

27 (5) An elector chosen to potentially serve as an election judge must be notified of selection at least
28 30 days before the primary election in even-numbered years. Each elector who agrees to serve as an election

1 judge shall attend a training class conducted under 13-4-203 and shall continue to serve as provided in 13-4-
2 103."

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4 **Section 4.** Section 13-4-203, MCA, is amended to read:

5 **"13-4-203. Instruction of judges -- training materials.** (1) Before each election, all election judges
6 must be instructed by the election administrator on current procedures as prescribed by the secretary of state.
7 In precincts where voting systems are used, instructions must cover both how to operate the voting system and
8 how to manually process any paper ballots.

9 (2) An election administrator may require a chief election judge to attend the training session
10 before each election, as well as a special session that the election administrator may hold for chief election
11 judges only, even if the chief election judge possesses a current certificate of completion pursuant to 13-1-
12 203(5)(b).

13 (3) Any individual willing to be appointed as an election judge who meets the qualifications of 13-4-
14 107, including all qualified individuals submitted by the county central committee pursuant to 13-4-102, may
15 attend an instruction session by registering with the election administrator. However, the individual may not be
16 paid for attendance unless the individual is appointed as an election judge.

17 (4) Each individual who attends a training session who is not nominated by a county central
18 committee must be asked if the individual prefers to affiliate with a political party eligible to nominate candidates
19 in the primary or prefers to be an independent. To ensure that an election board does not have more than a
20 simple majority of one political party, the preference indicated by the certified election judge must be considered
21 when making election board assignments.

22 (4) (5) Each election judge individual completing a training session under this section must be given a
23 certificate of completion. An individual may not serve as an election judge without a current certificate.
24 However, this requirement does not apply to individuals filling vacancies in emergencies. In emergencies, the
25 election administrator shall attempt to fill open positions with individuals with current certificates before seeking
26 individuals without current certificates.

27 (5) (6) A certificate of completion is current if the certificate is obtained before the primary election in
28 an even-numbered year.

1 (6) (7) Notice of the place and time of instruction must be given by the election administrator to the
2 ~~presiding officers of the political parties in the county~~ each county central committee."

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4 NEW SECTION. Section 5. Codification instruction. [Sections 1 and 2] are intended to be codified
5 as an integral part of Title 13, chapter 4, and the provisions of Title 13, chapter 4, apply to [sections 1 and 2].

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7 NEW SECTION. Section 6. Effective date. [This act] is effective January 1, 2026.

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