CHAPTER 15
CONDUCT OF PRIMARY ELECTIONS

NOTE: Unless otherwise noted, all sections within this chapter were added to the Government Code of Guam by P.L. 10-151 (June 24, 1970). During the Fifteenth Guam Legislature, the Compiler announced that Title 3 - Elections had been added to the new, permanent Guam Code Annotated. See 4 Guam Sess. L. Introduction (Mar. 1981).

SOURCE: Former chapter16 repealed and reenacted to this chapter by P.L. 31-255:2 (Dec. 11, 2012).


Article 2. Nomination; Determination of Candidates.
Article 3. Ballots.
Article 4. Voting and Ascertaining the Voting Results.
Article 5. Election Contests.

ARTICLE 1
GENERAL PROVISIONS

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§ 15102. Liberal Construction.
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§ 15101. Definitions.

The words and phrases in this Chapter shall, unless the same is inconsistent with the context, be construed as follows:

(a) Commission means the Election Commission.
(b) Election means a general election as distinguished from a primary election or a special election.

(c) Election officials mean those members of a precinct board serving as outlined in § 4104, Chapter 4 of this Title.

(d) Office means an elected public office.

(e) Party means an association of voters united for the purpose of promoting a common political policy, which maintains a general organization throughout Guam, including a regularly constituted central committee and precinct committee, and as further defined in § 1112, Chapter 1 of this Title.

(f) Precinct means a district as defined in Title 1 GCA § 403.

(g) Primary means a preliminary election in which voters cast ballots to determine the candidates for specific offices, as provided for in this Title.

(h) Primary ballot means a party ballot or a non-party ballot or a non-partisan ballot used at a primary.


**2012 NOTE:** This section was originally codified from GC § 2800, entitled “Recognized political party—national convention.” Codified as 3 GCA § 15101. Repealed by P.L. 31-255:2 (Dec. 11, 2012).

§ 15102. Liberal Construction.

This Chapter shall be liberally construed in favor of the primary voter.


**2012 NOTE:** This section was originally codified from GC § 2801, entitled “Same: selection of delegates.” Codified as 3 GCA § 15101. Repealed by P.L. 31-255:2 (Dec. 11, 2012).


The laws relating to elections shall apply to a primary insofar as they are consistent with this Chapter, the intent of which is to place the primary under the regulation and protection of the election laws, as far as possible, consistently with this Chapter.

§ 15104. Application of Chapter.

A partisan candidate for office shall be nominated in accordance with this Chapter and not otherwise, except as otherwise provided by law.


§ 15105. Party Represented by Whom.

Not less than ninety (90) days before the holding of a primary, each party seeking ballot placement shall submit to the Commission a list of its officers and of its central committee.


§ 15106. Expense of Printing Paid by Whom.

The cost of ballots, blanks and other supplies to be used at any primary, and other costs properly incurred in the preparation for or conducting of the primary, shall be borne by the government of Guam.


§ 15107. Expense of Polling Places, Ballot Boxes and Election Officials.

The Commission, at the expense of the government, shall provide the necessary polling places and ballot boxes for conducting an election for nomination of candidates for office. The Commission, at the expense of the government, shall pay election officials for their services in conducting a primary at the same rate of compensation as provided by this Title for an election.


§ 15108. Vacancies Not to Be Filled.

In the event that fewer than fifteen (15) candidates are running for Liheslaturan Guåhan within any party, the central committee of such party or parties shall not fill the party slate for the primary or general election to a full fifteen (15) nominees with its own nomination by filling those positions which are unfilled because fewer than fifteen (15) candidates ran in that party’s primary election.
§ 15109. Minimum Vote Required.

No person shall be deemed nominated in a primary election unless the candidate receives votes at least three (3) times greater than the required number of signatures needed for a nomination petition for candidacy for such election, or votes equal to four percent (4%) of the total number of persons who obtain ballots to vote in that primary election for all parties, whichever is less.

§ 15201. Primary Date.

The primary shall be conducted at the polling place or places determined by the Election Commission in each district on the last Saturday of August in every even-numbered year.

§ 15202. Notice of Primary; Publication, Posting.

(a) At least thirty (30) days before the date for holding the primary, the Commission shall prepare and transmit to each municipal mayor a notice, in
writing, designating the office for which candidates are to be nominated at
the primary, and state the time, date, and the place where the primary
election voting will be held.

(b) The Commission shall, within ten (10) days after transmitting the
notice to the municipal mayors, cause notice of the primary to be posted in
three (3) conspicuous public places in each of the municipal districts of
Guam, and to be published at least three (3) times in a newspaper of general
circulation in Guam. The notice shall state the time, date, and place where
the primary election voting will be held, together with the offices for which
candidates are to be nominated and elected.

SOURCE: GC § 2911. Added by P.L. 10-151 (June 24, 1970). Codified as 3 GCA §
16202. Repealed and reenacted to this section by P.L. 31-255:2 (Dec. 11, 2012).

2016 NOTE: Subsection designations were added to adhere to the Compiler’s
codification and alpha-numeric schemes pursuant to authority granted by 1 GCA §
1606.

§ 15203. Form of Nomination Papers.

(a) No candidate’s name shall be printed upon any official ballot to be
used at any primary election unless a nomination paper shall have been filed
on his or her behalf and in his or her legal name, as provided in this Chapter
in substantially the following form:

“NOMINATING PETITION (PARTISAN)

We, the undersigned, registered and qualified electors of Guam
hereby nominate

___________________________________________
Print or type full name of candidate
as a candidate of the ____________________ party for the office of
______________________, to be voted for in the primary election to
be held on the ______ day of __________,  ________, and we declare
that we have not signed, and will not sign, any nomination petition for
more persons than the number of candidates necessary to fill such
office at the next ensuing general election.

WARNING: Whoever knowingly signs more petitions for the same
office than there are persons to be elected to the office or signs a name
other than his own is violating the provisions of the Guam Election
Code.
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<tr>
<th>Full Name</th>
<th>Date of Birth</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Voting District</th>
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**CIRCULATOR CERTIFICATION**

The undersigned circulator of the above petition asserts that he or she is qualified to circulate this petition, that each signature on the petition was signed in his or her presence, that to the best of his or her knowledge and belief each signature is the genuine signature of the...
person purporting to sign the same, that the person was, at the time of
signing, a registered and qualified voter of Guam, and that such elector
was qualified to sign the petition.

__________________________       __________________ _______
Print or type full name of circulator                Signature of circulator

__________________________       __________________ ______
Address of circulator                                       Date”

(b) All nomination papers shall have substantially the above form
written or printed thereon; provided, that those filed for an independent
candidate may omit the words “of the _________ party.” No signature shall
be valid and counted unless it is written upon a sheet having this form
printed thereon, which shall be provided by the Commission.

(c) Nomination papers shall not be filed on behalf of any person for
more than one (1) party or for more than one (1) office; nor shall nomination
papers be filed on behalf of any person both as a party candidate and as an
independent candidate.

SOURCE: GC § 2912. Added by P.L. 10-151 (June 24, 1970). Codified as 3 GCA
§ 16203. Repealed and reenacted to this section by P.L. 31-255:2 (Dec. 11, 2012).

2016 NOTE: Subsection designations were added to adhere to the Compiler’s
codification and alpha-numeric schemes pursuant to authority granted by 1 GCA §
1606.


(a) No person shall sign the nomination papers of more than one (1)
candidate for the same office, nor for more than the actual number of offices
of one (1) class. Nomination papers shall be construed in this regard
according to priority of filing, and the name of any person appearing thereon
shall be counted only so long as this provision is not violated, and not
thereafter.

(b) No name on any nominating petition shall be counted as valid
unless the signer is an elector, qualified and registered to vote for the
candidate at the next primary or general election.
§ 15205. Nomination Papers —Number of Signers.

(a) No person shall be certified as a candidate for nomination unless the following number of qualified electors shall have signed a petition in favor of the candidate:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Office Required</th>
<th>Number of Signatures</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mayor</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice Mayor</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senator</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I  Maga’låhen Guåhan and I Segundu Na Maga’lahi</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington Representative</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) When there are candidates for the mayoral or vice-mayoral positions in municipalities or districts that had less than one thousand (1,000) total votes cast in the prior election, the mayoral and vice-mayoral candidates in these jurisdictions shall acquire five percent (5%) of the qualified electors based from the prior election.

§ 15206. Time for Filing Nomination Papers; Fees.

Nomination papers shall be filed with the Commission at least sixty (60) days but not earlier than one hundred thirty (130) days prior to the day for holding the primary. There shall be deposited with each nomination a fee of One Hundred Dollars ($100.00) on account of the expenses attending the holding of the primary, which shall be paid into the Treasury of Guam. Upon receipt at the office of the Commission of a nomination of a candidate, the
day, hour and minute when it was received shall be endorsed thereon.


§ 15207. Independent Candidates.

Nomination papers may be filed on behalf of independent candidates. The papers shall be in the same form and signed in the same manner as in the case of party candidates.


§ 15208. Vacancies.

(a) In case of the death, withdrawal or disqualification of a nominee for *I Maga’lāhen Guåhan* after a primary, the candidate for *I Segundu Na Maga’lahi* on the same slate shall thereupon become candidate for *I Maga’lāhen Guåhan*, who shall then select the nominee for *I Segundu Na Maga’lahi*.

(b) In case of the death, withdrawal or disqualification of any nominee for *I Segundu Na Maga’lahi* after a primary, the nominee for *I Maga’lāhen Guåhan* on the same slate shall select the nominee for *I Segundu Na Maga’lahi*.

(c) In case of the death, withdrawal or disqualification of any nominee for any other office after a primary, the vacancy so caused shall be filled by the nominee to such office receiving the next highest number of votes in the primary.

(d) In case of the death, withdrawal or disqualification of any candidate for office after an unopposed primary, the vacancy so caused shall be filled by the central committee of the party.


2016 NOTE: Subsection designations were added to adhere to the Compiler’s codification and alpha-numeric schemes pursuant to authority granted by 1 GCA § 1606.
§ 15301. Form of Primary Election Ballot.

Ballots used in the primary election shall be in the form prescribed by the Guam Election Commission and shall conform to the following minimum requirements:

(a) (1) All candidates for all offices to be contested in the forthcoming general election shall appear on a primary ballot to be voted upon by registered voters in each voting district. A voting district is each district within Guam as defined in Title 1 GCA § 403, unless otherwise provided in this Title. The Guam Election Commission shall print a ballot with the names of all qualified candidates from the Republican Party on one (1) side of the ballot, and the names of all qualified candidates from the Democratic Party on the opposite side. This ballot format shall be used so as to limit voters to mark their ballots in only one (1) party for all offices in that primary election.

(2) If there are qualified candidates who are not members of either the Republican Party or the Democratic Party, the Guam Election Commission shall reconfigure the ballot as necessary in order that candidates’ names shall be placed on the ballot in three (3) or more columns with a separate column for each different recognized party, and a separate column for those non-affiliated. The Guam Election Commission shall limit voters to mark their ballots in only one (1) party or for non-affiliated candidates only for all offices in that primary election.

(b) Across the top of the ballot shall be printed the words “OFFICIAL PRIMARY ELECTION BALLOT” and the date of the primary election.

(c) Thereafter shall appear an explanation to the voter instructing him or her how to vote.

(d) There shall appear specific instructions in boldface type on each ballot that a voter may cast votes under one (1) party only; that if votes are cast for candidates of more than one (1) party for any office or nomination of offices appearing on the ballot, the entire ballot shall be
void. The instructions on the ballot shall clearly inform voters of the mandate herein.

(e) The ballot for each office for which party nominations are sought shall contain instructions to the voters as to the maximum number of candidates that may be selected for that office.

(f) The Guam Election Commission shall make accommodation for the voter to write in the name of a person or persons not otherwise appearing on the ballot, under each office being contested under each party heading.

(g) Should the Guam Election Commission adopt a ballot form using any mechanical, electro-mechanical, or electronic device to record the vote, or aid in recording the vote, the voter instruction and information required by this Section shall appear on the device in the place provided therefore, or otherwise shall be prominently displayed within the voting booth so as to be easily read by the voter.


2016 NOTE: Subitem designations were added to adhere to the Compiler’s codification and alpha-numeric schemes pursuant to authority granted by 1 GCA § 1606.

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ARTICLE 4
VOTING AND ASCERTAINING THE VOTING RESULTS

§ 15401. Persons Entitled to Vote; List of Electors.
§ 15402. Manner of Voting.
§ 15403. Challenging.
§ 15404. Result of Election, I Maga’låhen Guåhan and I Segundu Na Maga’lahi; Other Offices; Primary Constituting Election to Office.

§ 15405. Validity of Ballot.

§ 15401. Persons Entitled to Vote; List of Electors.

No person shall be entitled to vote at any primary unless he or she shall have registered as a duly qualified elector of Guam.


§ 15402. Manner of Voting.

Any person desiring to vote at a primary shall state his or her full name and address to the election officials, and shall present a validly issued photo identification card issued by a federal, state, Guam secondary school, Guam post-secondary school or Government of Guam entity to the precinct official or other authorized election official. If the person desiring to vote is not challenged, a precinct clerk shall issue to him or her only one (1) official primary ballot. The voter shall proceed to enter one (1) of the compartments provided and therein mark the ballot. The marked ballot shall immediately be placed in the ballot box provided. In addition, the provisions of Chapter 10 of this Title (Absent Voting) shall also apply to a primary election so as to permit voting by absentee ballot therein.


§ 15403. Challenging.

Any person rightfully within the polling place may challenge the right of any other person requesting to vote. The challenge shall be on the grounds that the elector is not the person alleged to be, or that the elector is not entitled to vote on the grounds specified in § 9118, Chapter 9 of this Title. No other or further challenge shall be allowed. The challenge shall be immediately considered and decided upon by the precinct board, a ruling of the majority thereof being final.

§ 15404. Result of Election.

I Maga‘låhen Guåhan and I Segundu Na Maga‘låhi; Other Offices; Primary Constituting Election to Office.

(a) I Maga‘låhen Guåhan and I Segundu Na Maga‘låhi team receiving a plurality of votes cast for a partisan nomination shall be the party nominees for the general election. No I Maga‘låhen Guåhan and I Segundu Na Maga‘låhi team running in the independent column shall be eligible for general election ballot placement unless such team receives a minimum twenty percent (20%) of the total combined votes cast for the winning teams seeking partisan nomination.

(b) The winners in all other partisan primary contests shall be the candidates receiving the highest number of votes, except that no candidate running in the independent column shall be eligible for general election ballot placement unless he or she receives votes equal to at least ten percent (10%) of the total number of the valid ballots cast for the office for which he or she is a candidate.

(c) Except in the case of a gubernatorial team, if in any primary a candidate who has been certified as being nominated (1) submits to the Commission a written declination of his or her nomination, or (2) dies, the Commission shall certify as nominated the person having the next highest number of votes in the same primary; provided, that the Commission determines that the addition of the newly certified candidate to the ballot shall not prevent the Commission from conducting the general election at the scheduled date and time. If the Commission in its discretion determines that time does not permit the addition of the new nominee to the ballot, the vacancy shall be filled as otherwise provided by law. In the case of the death of a nominee for I Maga‘låhen Guåhan or I Segundu Na Maga‘låhi, the vacancy shall be filled as provided by law.


2016 NOTE: Subitem designations were altered to adhere to the Compiler’s codification and alpha-numeric schemes pursuant to authority granted by 1 GCA § 1606.
§ 15405. Validity of Ballot.

All questions as to validity of a ballot cast at any primary election held under this Chapter shall be decided upon immediately, and the opinion of the majority of the Commission shall be final and binding, subject to review by the Superior Court of Guam.


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ARTICLE 5
ELECTION CONTESTS

§ 15501. Petition to Contest.

Any candidate directly interested, or any registered and qualified elector of any precinct, may file a petition in the Superior Court of Guam, setting forth any cause or causes why the decision of the Commission should be revised, corrected or changed.


§ 15502. Filing of Petition.

The petition shall be filed in the Superior Court of Guam within seven (7) days following the primary election proposed to be contested.


§ 15503. Summons.

The Clerk of the Superior Court shall issue a summon to the respondents named in the petition to appear before the Superior Court within five (5) days after thereof.

§ 15504. Hearing and Judgment.

(a) The Court shall hear the contest in a summary manner, and at the hearing, the Court shall cause the evidence to be reduced to writing, and shall, within eight (8) days following the return, give judgment, fully stating all findings of fact and of law.

(b) The judgment shall decide which candidate was nominated or elected, as the case may be, in the matter presented by the petition, and a certified copy of the judgment shall forthwith be served on the Commission, which shall place the name of the candidate declared to be nominated on the ballot for the forthcoming general election, and the judgment shall be conclusive of the right of the candidate so declared to be nominated.


2016 NOTE: Subsection designations were added to adhere to the Compiler’s codification and alpha-numeric schemes pursuant to authority granted by 1 GCA § 1606.