

## 2025 Candidate Filing Packet Instructions

### **Candidate Filing Period § 36 A**

Monday, February 03 .....	8:00 AM-5:00 PM
Tuesday, February 04.....	8:00 AM-5:00 PM
Wednesday, February 05 .....	8:00 AM-5:00 PM
Thursday, February 06 .....	8:00 AM-5:00 PM

### **Where to File**

Candidates must file for office in-person at the Cherokee Nation Election Commission Office located at 17763 South Muskogee Avenue, Tahlequah, Oklahoma 74464.

### **Filing Fee - § 35A**

Office of Principal Chief .....	\$2,500.00
Office of Deputy Chief .....	\$2,000.00
Office of Council .....	\$1,000.00

Fees are to be paid to the Cherokee Nation Election Commission at the Election Commission Office. Fees must be paid by cashier's check, money order, valid check or cash. **No refund of filing fees will be permitted.** § 35 B

A filing fee charged pursuant to this section may be paid from a Candidate's personal or campaign funds. §35C

### **Qualifications**

- A. The Candidate shall be a citizen of the Cherokee Nation in accordance with Article IV of the Constitution of the Cherokee Nation and/or Cherokee Nation Supreme Court orders or decisions § 31 A 1.
- B. The Candidate shall not have been convicted of or pled guilty or have pled no contest to a felony charge under the laws of the United States of America or of any state, territory or possession thereof, or convicted of a crime in any Military General Court-Martial or Tribal Court of any federally recognized Indian Tribe that would be considered a felony in State or Federal court, unless such person has received a pardon or an expungement of his or her felony conviction, guilty plea to a felony charge, or plea of no contest/defense to a felony charge from an authorized official of the jurisdiction in which the Candidate was convicted, pled guilty or no contest to said felony charge. A deferred sentence shall not constitute a pardon or expungement as defined under CNCA Title 26 "Elections" § 31 A 2.
- C. The Candidate shall not hold any office of honor, profit, or trust in any other tribe of Indians, either elective or appointive, if elected to the Cherokee Nation office which he or she is seeking. § 31 A 3.
- D. The Candidate shall certify that if elected, he or she shall resolve any and all conflicting interests as defined in CNCA Title 28 "Ethics" § 3 C and CNCA Title 26 "Elections" §31 A 4.

- E. The Candidate shall not be an employee of the Cherokee Nation, including any corporation, agency, or other entity which at least fifty-one percent is owned by the Cherokee Nation as of the date of filing or at any time thereafter if elected provided, that an incumbent serving in an Elective Office shall not be deemed to be an employee for purposes of this election. §31 B 1.
- F. To meet the requirements of §31 B1 above, any person who has been an employee of the Cherokee Nation during the Election Period must have resigned or otherwise terminated his or her employment with Cherokee Nation prior to the date he or she actually files the Declaration of Candidacy form with the Commission and provide proof of their resignation or termination at the time of filing. CNEC Rules & Regulations § 2.08A
- G. The Candidate shall have obtained the age of twenty-five (25) for the Office of Council at the time of the election. §33 A
- H. The Candidate shall have obtained the age of thirty (30) for the Office of Principal Chief and Deputy Chief at the time of the election. §32 A

### **General Information**

1. The Candidate may not file to run for an office if he or she has already filed to run for another office in the same election unless the prior filing is withdrawn. §31 B2
2. The Candidate shall have established a bona fide permanent residence in the district for which he or she is a Candidate for no less than 270 days immediately preceding the day of the election in which he or she is seeking election. Proof of a bona fide permanent residence shall be determined by the Election Commission. If elected to office, the Candidate shall maintain a bona fide permanent residence in the district which he or she represents. Failure to meet this requirement shall subject the person to disqualification and removal from office. This section shall apply to “At-Large” District Candidates, and thereby shall require that they establish a bona fide permanent residence located outside the jurisdictional boundaries of the Cherokee Nation no less than 270 days immediately preceding the day of the election to which he or she is seeking election. §33 B. **The 2025 Election Period Residency Deadline was September 10, 2024.**
3. Verification of residence must be shown by at least three (3) of the following documents, provided always that such documents show one or more addresses within the required geographic area for a continuous period of 270 days for the time-period outlined in the requirements for each elective office. §34 B
  1. Current Driver’s License(s)
  2. Utility bill or bills
  3. Income Tax Return from the preceding year
  4. State or County Voter’s Registration
  5. Homestead Exemption
  6. A bona fide document evidencing such verification
4. The Election Commission shall conduct background checks and review all information necessary for a determination of eligibility pursuant to regulation prescribed by the Election Commission. §36 C
5. Unless a Candidate is unopposed, only opposing Candidate(s) shall have the right to contest the eligibility of any Candidate to run for office. §37 A
6. The Election Commission will have qualified voter lists available for Candidates or any other Cherokee Citizen to purchase. The fee will be based on the Reproduction Fees List according

to the type of list requested. Payment shall be made at the time of requesting the list by cashier's check, money order, valid check, or cash.

7. The order in which the names will appear on the ballots shall be determined by lot.

### **Withdrawal of Candidacy**

Any Candidate who wishes to withdraw from the election shall have the opportunity to do so by providing a formal written notice to the Election Commission; provided, a Candidate that withdraws after the ballots are printed shall remain on the ballot, but any votes for said Candidate shall not be counted or considered in determining the winner of a General or Special Election or if a Run-Off is necessary. CNCA Title 26 "Elections" § 35 B, **No Refund** states: "No refund of a filing fee shall be permitted for any reason, even if the Candidate withdraws voluntarily or is disqualified under the provisions of this law."

### **Watcher Information**

1. Each Candidate in a General Primary Election for the office of the Principal Chief, Deputy Principal Chief, and for the Council may submit (1) one name and up to (2) two alternates as their designated watchers at each Precinct and Early Walk-In Absentee Voting at the time of filing. Each Candidate may also submit (1) one watcher name and (2) alternate names for the Absentee Ballot Affidavit examinations and (1) one watcher name and (2) alternate names for Tabulation Watchers. §53 A
2. In the event of a Run-Off Election, Candidates may submit (1) one watcher name and up to (2) two alternate watcher names as their designated watchers at each precinct **within five (5) business days** from date of certification of results of the General Primary Election. §53 B
3. No Candidate for any elective office in the Cherokee Nation, as defined in CNCA Title 26 "Elections" § 3 shall be a watcher. No one in an elective office for the Cherokee Nation, as defined in CNCA Title 26 "Elections" § 3 shall be a watcher if they are currently serving in that elective office capacity during an election. In addition, no former tribal councilor, former Principal Chief or former Deputy Principal Chief shall serve as watchers in any Cherokee Nation Elections. §53 C
4. The selection of the watchers and their designated precincts shall be by random drawing of names submitted by Candidates for each respective district and Early Walk-In Absentee Voting. §53 C
5. The selection of two (2) Absentee Watchers shall be made for the examination of absentee declarations. §53 C
6. The Election Commission shall select at random (2) Tabulation Watchers selected pursuant to §54 A: one (1) for the Principal Chief and Deputy Chief race tabulations and one (1) for the Tribal Council race tabulation. §54 A

7. No person shall serve as an Absentee Watcher for more than one day and no person shall serve as an Early Walk-In Absentee Watcher for more than one day. §53 C
8. **All names for consideration must have come from the list submitted by the Candidate when the Candidate filed for office.**

**For information pertaining to the 2025 Cherokee Nation Election, please contact the Cherokee Nation Election Commission Office.**

**Phone:** 1-800-353-2895 or 918-458-5899

**Email:** election-commission@cherokee.org

**Fax:** 918-458-6101

**Website:** <https://election.cherokee.org>

**Mailing Address:** P.O. Box 1188 Tahlequah, OK 74465-1188

**Physical Address:** 17763 South Muskogee Avenue, Tahlequah, OK 74464

