

118.129 Spelling and form of names on ballot.

- (1) The Secretary of State or the county clerk, as appropriate, shall certify the exact spelling and form of the name of the candidate to be printed on all ballots in accordance with the requirements listed in this section.
- (2) A candidate's nickname which is found to be, in the discretion of the Secretary of State or the county clerk, as appropriate, a title, rank, degree, job description, or spurious phrase shall be placed on the ballot only if it is the candidate's bona fide nickname, generally used by acquaintances of the candidate in the county of residence to refer to the candidate, and if the nickname is acknowledged, by affidavit, under oath, by five (5) residents of the county in which the candidate resides, to be a bona fide nickname. The candidate shall also acknowledge, by affidavit under oath, that this is his or her bona fide nickname and is not being used to gain an advantage on the ballot.
- (3) A nickname shall always appear set off in quotation marks and immediately before the last name. Periods shall follow all abbreviations or initials. Additional qualifiers following the last name, such as "Jr" or "III" shall not be separated from the last name by a comma and shall be followed by a period.
- (4) The candidate's name shall always appear in the following form: first or given name, contraction of given name, or initial; middle name or names or initials, if desired by the candidate; nickname if desired by the candidate; and last or surname in full. All names shall be in substantially the following form: John Lincoln "Jack" Doe; or J. Lincoln "Jack" Doe; or J. L. "Jack" Doe Jr.; or any of the above combinations without the intervening nickname.
- (5) The total number of spaces, inclusive of letters, spaces, and punctuation, which may be utilized on the ballot for a candidate's name and, if any, nickname, shall be twenty-five (25). Notwithstanding the listing of the candidate's name on the filing papers, spaces, periods, quotation marks, and commas necessary for proper punctuation shall be added by the Secretary of State or the county clerk, as appropriate. No candidate's name shall exceed twenty-five (25) spaces. The Secretary of State or the county clerk, as appropriate, shall determine the correct listing for any candidate whose name exceeds twenty-five (25) spaces to conform to this requirement.

Effective: April 14, 2026

History: Amended 2026 Ky. Acts ch. 175, sec. 12, effective April 14, 2026. -- Created 1992 Ky. Acts ch. 186, sec. 2, effective November 5, 1992.