

Missouri State Archives

Finding Aid 5.5

Office of Secretary of State

Commissions

Writs of Election, 1838-

Abstract: Writs of election (1838-2026) issued by the governor and filed with the secretary of state.

Extent: 1.6 cubic ft. (4 legal-size Hollinger boxes)

Physical Description: Paper

Location: MSA Stacks

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions: No special restrictions.

Publication Restrictions: Copyright is in the public domain. Items reproduced for publication should carry the credit line: Courtesy of the Missouri State Archives.

Preferred Citation: [Name of Document], [Date]; Writs of Elections, 1838- ; Commissions; Office of Secretary of State, Record Group 5; Missouri State Archives, Jefferson City.

Acquisition Information: Agency transfer. Various accessions.

Processing Information: Processing done by various staff members. Accessions 2005-0019 and 2005-0107 were processed by Mary Kay Coker on August 2, 2005; 2006-0083 on May 15, 2005; 2007-0094 on July 6, 2007; 2007-0197 on November 2, 2007; 2009-0025 on July 29, 2009. Reprocessed on March 18, 2010, to remove certificates of election and gubernatorial appointments and to add writs found in miscellaneous elections materials. Accession 2012-0005 processed on January 10, 2012; 2012-0048 and 2012-0055 on June 8, 2012; 2013-0065 on April 11, 2013; 2013-0120 on July 17, 2013; 2014-0032 on February 3, 2014; 2015-0120 on July 29, 2015; 2016-0104 on July 11, 2016; 2017-0002 on January 11, 2017; 2017-0114 on July 26, 2017; 2017-0120 on August 8, 2017; 2017-0161 on October 23, 2017; 2017-0186 on November 17, 2017; 2018-0016 on February 7, 2018; 2018-0019 on February 16, 2018; 2018-0049 on March 30, 2018; 2018-0177 on August 8, 2018; 2018-0022 on August 6, 2019; 2020-0027 on February 3, 2020; 2021-0004 on January 6, 2021; 2020-0008 on July 23, 2021. Added resignation of

State Representative Shawn Rhoads (2018) on May 4, 2022. Accession 2026-0065 on June 2, 2026.

Writs of Election, 1838-2026

Arrangement: Chronologically by date issued/filed or by date of election

Scope and Content

Writs of election authorize the appropriate authorities to hold elections to fill vacancies (Missouri Constitution, Article III, Section 14) or to vote on constitutional amendments (Article XII, Section 2b). They are issued and signed by the governor and attested to by the secretary of state. The date specified may fall on a primary or general election or may be a special election.

Occasionally, the records include the resignation, expulsion, or notice of death of the vacated official and related correspondence. In the earliest years (1838-1846), these records may supplant the actual writ, though many note that a writ is to be issued. Sometimes it is unclear whether the vacancy was filled by appointment or election.

Records may also include a revocation or withdrawal of the writ, as in 1975, either to issue a new writ or to call off the election entirely. The series also includes several broadsides from county sheriffs announcing the election. For instance, Jackson County for the 14th Senatorial District (1865); Maries County for Judge of Circuit Court (1875); St. Louis County for 2nd Congressional District (1882); and Ralls County for 31st Legislative District (1882).

Writs of election are most often for vacancies in the General Assembly but also for county officials, judges, and elected officials. In 1857, a special election was called for the office of governor after the resignation of Trusten Polk. During the Civil War, many special elections were held for those killed or expelled from office. In 1974, the governor held a special primary election to choose between two Republican candidates who received a tie vote in the primary in Camden County.

Over the years, writs of election have also been issued as proclamations. Some writs of election in this series are, in fact, labeled proclamations. Because of this confusion, writs of election can sometimes also be found in the series *Governor's Proclamations* and, more often, in the closed series *Governor's Proclamations Concerning Elections* (1946-1984).

Container List

Box	Folder	Years	Contents
1	1	1838	Writs of Election
1	2	1840	Writs of Election
1	3	1842	Writs of Election
1	4	1844	Writs of Election
1	5	1846	Writs of Election

Box	Folder	Years	Contents
1	23	1848	Writs of Election
1	6	1852	Writs of Election
1	7	1854	Writs of Election
1	8	1855	Writs of Election
1	9	1856	Writs of Election
1	10	1857	Writs of Election
1	11	1858	Writs of Election
1	12	1859	Writs of Election
1	13	1860	Writs of Election
1	14	1861	Writs of Election
1	15	1862	Writs of Election
1	16	1863	Writs of Election
1	17	1864	Writs of Election
1	18	1865	Writs of Election
1	19	1866	Writs of Election
1	20	1867	Writs of Election
1	21	1868	Writs of Election
1	22	1869	Writs of Election
2	1	1870	Writs of Election
2	2	1871	Writs of Election
2	3	1872	Writs of Election
2	4	1873	Writs of Election
2	5	1874	Writs of Election
2	6	1875	Writs of Election
2	7	1876	Writs of Election
2	8	1877	Writs of Election
2	9	1878	Writs of Election
2	10	1879	Writs of Election
2	11	1880	Writs of Election
2	12	1882	Writs of Election
2	13	1884	Writs of Election
2	14	1885	Writs of Election
2	15	1886	Writs of Election

Box	Folder	Years	Contents
2	16	1887	Writs of Election
2	17	1888	Writs of Election
2	18	1889	Writs of Election
2	19	1890	Writs of Election
2	20	1892	Writs of Election
3	1	1895	Writs of Election
3	2	1897	Writs of Election
3	3	1898	Writs of Election
3	4	1899	Writs of Election
3	5	1902	Writs of Election
3	6	1904	Writs of Election
3	7	1906	Writs of Election
3	8	1907	Writs of Election
3	9	1908	Writs of Election
3	10	1909	Writs of Election
3	11	1910	Writs of Election
3	12	1912	Writs of Election
3	13	1916	Writs of Election
4	14	1918	Writs of Election
3	15	1919	Writs of Election
3	16	1920	Writs of Election
3	17	1925	Writs of Election
3	18	1926	Writs of Election
3	19	1929	Writs of Election
3	20	1931	Writs of Election
3	21	1932	Writs of Election
3	22	1933	Writs of Election
3	23	1935	Writs of Election
3	24	1940	Writs of Election
3	25	1942	Writs of Election
3	26	1943	Writs of Election
3	27	1944	Writs of Election
3	28	1945	Writs of Election

Box	Folder	Years	Contents
3	29	1946	Writs of Election
3	30	1947	Writs of Election
3	31	1948	Writs of Election
3	32	1950	Writs of Election
3	33	1951	Writs of Election
3	34	1952	Writs of Election
3	35	1953	Writs of Election
3	36	1954	Writs of Election
3	37	1955	Writs of Election
3	38	1956	Writs of Election
3	39	1957	Writs of Election
3	40	1959	Writs of Election
4	1	1960	Writs of Election
4	2	1961	Writs of Election
4	3	1962	Writs of Election
4	4	1964	Writs of Election
4	5	1965	Writs of Election
4	6	1966	Writs of Election
4	7	1974	Writs of Election
4	8	1975	Writs of Election
4	9	1976	Writs of Election
4	10	1977	Writs of Election
4	11	1978	Writs of Election
4	12	1979	Writs of Election
4	13	1981	Writs of Election
4	14	1982	Writs of Election
4	15	1983	Writs of Election
4	16	1984	Writs of Election
4	17	1985	Writs of Election
4	18	1986	Writs of Election
4	19	1987	Writs of Election
4	20	1988	Writs of Election
4	21	1989	Writs of Election

Box	Folder	Years	Contents
4	22	1990	Writs of Election
4	23	1991	Writs of Election
4	24	1992	Writs of Election
4	25	1993	Writs of Election
4	26	1994	Writs of Election
4	27	1995	Writs of Election
4	28	1996	Writs of Election
4	29	1997	Writs of Election
4	30	1998	Writs of Election
4	31	1999	Writs of Election
4	32	2000	Writs of Election
4	33	2001	Writs of Election
4	34	2002	Writs of Election
4	35	2003	Writs of Election
4	36	2005	Writs of Election
4	37	2006	Writs of Election
4	38	2007	Writs of Election
4	39	2009	Writs of Election
4	40	2010	Writs of Election
4	41	2011	Writs of Election
4	42	2013	Writs of Election
4	43	2014	Writs of Election
4	44	2015	Writs of Election
4	45	2016	Writs of Election
4	46	2017	Writs of Election
4	47	2018	Writs of Election
4	48	2019	Writs of Election
4	49	2021	Writs of Election
4	50	2026	Writs of Election