

ARE YOU READY TO RUN FOR MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS?

Taking the step to run for municipal elections is a big decision—it's exciting, but it also requires serious preparation. Before diving in, it's important to assess whether you're truly ready for the challenges ahead.

Here's a practical framework, designed specifically for Lebanon's unique political, social, and electoral local landscape, to help you evaluate your readiness and set yourself up for success.



HERE'S WHAT TO CONSIDER IF YOU HAVE DECIDED TO RUN FOR MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS



1 - Understand the laws and procedures

- Familiarize yourself thoroughly with the electoral law and candidacy requirements.
- Ensure compliance with campaign financing regulations and media visibility requirements.

2 - Analyze the political landscape

- Assess the political and social environment in your constituency.
- Identify your competitors and analyze their strengths and weaknesses.
- Build supportive alliances for your campaign.

3 - Clarify your political vision

- Define the key issues you will advocate for.
- Ensure your messaging aligns with the needs and concerns of voters.
- Develop clear messages that highlight your vision on both local and national levels.
- Make sure to include women, youth, and persons with disabilities in your plans to ensure more diverse and inclusive participation.

4 - Build a strong support network

- Strengthen your relationships within the community.
- Estimate the potential number of votes you can secure.
- Form a volunteer team to support both field and digital campaign activities.

5 - Manage your financial resources wisely

- Plan sustainable and transparent funding for your campaign.
- Allocate a well-thought-out budget covering advertisements, rallies, and other activities.

6 - Prepare for media engagement and public communication

- Develop skills for public speaking and participating in debates.
- Be prepared to handle criticism and political pressure effectively.
- Enhance your social media presence with cohesive and impactful messages.

7 - Commit to good governance and inclusive practices

- Adopt policies that promote transparency, gender equality, and youth empowerment.
- Consider the long-term impact of your candidacy beyond the election.

8 - Consult the community and identify voter concerns

- Seek feedback from trusted figures in your community regarding your candidacy.
- Use polls to gauge potential voter support.

9 - Review your personal motivation and readiness

- Insure that your candidacy is driven by a commitment to serve the community and create positive change.
- Be prepared to dedicate time and effort to your campaign without expecting immediate results.





10 - Make sure that you are aware of

THE LEBANESE MUNICIPAL LAW

- Lebanon adopts a majoritarian system for municipal elections, where municipal council members and mukhtars are elected based on either lists or individual candidates. The candidates receiving the highest number of votes are elected.
- Municipal elections occur at the local level, with each municipality serving as a distinct electoral district.
- The size of the municipal council depends on the population:

Large municipalities



over 80,000 residents,
elect a 24-member council.

Medium-sized municipalities



25,000–80,000 residents,
elect a 18-member council.

Small municipalities



2,000–25,000 residents,
elect a 12-member council.

Very small municipalities



fewer than 2,000 residents
elect a 9-member council.

- The voting process varies based on the number of candidates, allowing for either closed or open lists. Additionally, the law permits family and political agreements within municipalities, which can sometimes result in councils being elected by acclamation, meaning without a formal vote when no opposing candidates are present.
- The mayor and deputy mayor are elected by the municipal council members, not directly by the voters.
- Mukhtar elections are held simultaneously with municipal elections, and mukhtars are elected through direct voting by the residents in villages and small towns.

The eligibility and all legal requirements

What is the minimum age of eligibility to run for municipal or mukhtar council?

The minimum age requirement for municipal or mukhtar council candidacy is 25 years old.

What happens if the Qaimqam or Muhafiz does not issue a decision approving my application?

If the Qaimqam or Muhafiz does not issue a decision within the legally mandated time frame, their silence is considered tacit approval, and your candidacy is automatically validated.

What happens if the Qaimqam or Muhafiz issues a decision rejecting my application?

If your application is rejected, you may file a petition with the State Council free of charge within one week of the rejection. The State Council is required to issue a final decision within five days of registration. If no decision is issued within this period, your candidacy is considered approved by default.

What is the deadline for filing my candidacy for municipal and mukhtar elections?

You must submit your candidacy application at least 10 days before Election Day for every voting round.

Where and how do I file my candidacy for municipal and mukhtar elections?

Every person wishing to run for municipal office must submit a notarized application to the Qaimqam or Muhafiz. The application must include:

- A personal civil status record
- A recent police record (issued within the last month)
- A copy of the voter register page where your name is listed, authenticated by the rapporteur of the registration committee
- A deposit of 10 000 000 Lebanese pounds

What is the deadline for withdrawing a candidacy application and deposit?

A candidate may withdraw their candidacy by submitting a notarized withdrawal statement to the Qaimqam or Muhafiz at least five days before Election Day.

What happens to the candidacy deposit in case of withdrawal or election results?

The deposit of 110 USD is refunded only if the candidate wins or secures at least 25% of the votes.

Who is not eligible to run for office?

The following individuals are ineligible to run for municipal elections:

- Illiterate persons.
- Persons judicially deprived of their civil rights.
- Individuals convicted of felonies or misdemeanors specified in Article 10(3) of the Parliamentary Elections Law and Articles 329–334 of the Penal Code.
- Persons convicted of crimes related to affiliation with secret organizations.
- Individuals legally interdicted by court order due to dementia or mental health conditions.
- Persons declared bankrupt until they have been officially rehabilitated.

Municipal council members who fall into any of the above categories are automatically deemed resigned by decision of the Muhafiz.

