



Oakland Communications

How to Participate in the Candidates Forum

If you are a candidate that will be formally listed on the **November general election ballot** for the Oakland Board of Education, Ramapo-Indian Hills High School Board of Education, or are running for any elected position in the Borough of Oakland, please be aware that you qualify to participate in the Oakland Communications Commission Candidates' Forum (hereinto referred as "the Forum").

The Oakland Communications Commission (OCC) is a commission led by volunteers under the auspices of the Borough. The mission of the OCC is that they "shall provide, operate and maintain open, unbiased, clear, concise, and informative channels of communication for the residents of the Borough of Oakland while continuously striving to seek new, improved and more effective methods and operations for Borough government to better communicate with residents." To that end, a long-standing tradition of the Oakland Television Committee, a committee that operates within the OCC, is to provide candidates for local elected office an opportunity to introduce themselves and share their platform with the citizens of Oakland.

A Candidate who chooses to participate in the Candidate's Forum will have their recording shown on Oakland TV through Election Day until the polls close and will also have their recording posted to the Borough YouTube Channel. After the polls close on Election Day, as mandated by OCC bylaws, the Candidate's Forum recordings for that year will no longer air on Oakland TV at any time going forward. However, the Oakland Television Committee has decided that Candidates' Forum recordings should still be available to view on the Borough's YouTube Channel for a total of three (3) years from when they were initially posted. When three years have passed, the Oakland Television Committee shall remove those Forum recordings but will continue to keep the original recordings in our archives. However, if a Candidate wishes to have their Forum recording removed from YouTube once the election is over and before the three year removal window has come, it shall be the candidate's responsibility to send a request in writing to the **Oakland Television Committee, c/o the Oakland Communications Commission, 1 Municipal Plaza, Oakland, N.J. 07436** to have the recording removed. The Television Committee shall then remove the recording from the Borough YouTube channel in an acceptably timely manner.

If participating in this Forum is of interest to you, **it is your responsibility** to read the information below and file and follow the deadlines, rules, and regulations that are described. Except where mentioned in the bylaws, there are no exceptions to the set dates and rules as part of the Forum in order to ensure fairness amongst all candidates.

According to OCC Bylaws (last amended in 2022), the Forum purpose, rules, and regulations are the following (**bolding** added for important emphasis):

- 8.5 The Oakland Television Committee and the Oakland Communications Commission find that it is in the public interest for residents to be informed about candidates running for local municipal and school board offices in the fall election. To that end, the Television Committee shall sponsor a "Candidate's Forum" - an informative television special to allow candidates to introduce themselves to the community and share their platform.
- 8.5.1 The candidates will be made aware of the opportunity to participate and the guidelines regarding participation in the Forum upon receiving candidate filing information from the Oakland Borough Clerk, through the Borough website, or upon request to the OCC.
- 8.5.2 Any eligible candidate for local school board or a municipal office who wishes to participate in the Candidate's Forum must **contact the Communications Commission in writing by August 1 to express their interest in taking part and shall also express which of two dates they would like to attend in order to be recorded.**
- 8.5.3 Candidates shall choose **either the Saturday following Labor Day or the second Sunday following Labor Day** to attend and record their speech as part of the Forum. Recording will start promptly at noon. **Exact recording times for each candidate will be determined by the Chairperson of the Oakland Television Committee**, based on the information received regarding each candidate's chosen available date and shall be done in the order of office being sought (Mayor, Council, Regional High School Board of Education, Oakland Board of Education). **The Chairperson of the**

Television Committee shall communicate with each candidate what time he or she should show up to be recorded for the Forum at least two weeks in advance. Only two dates shall be provided to candidates to record the Forum and no candidate shall be able to reschedule if they do not or cannot attend.

8.5.3.b If one of two recording days happens to be a religious holiday or an act of God prohibits the Forum from being recorded that day, the recording scheduled for that day will instead be held exactly one week later. If an issue/s further persists that precludes the Forum from being recorded, a rescheduled makeup date and time shall be decided solely by the Oakland Television Committee Chairperson and the candidate/s shall be promptly notified.

8.5.4 **Each candidate will have no more than six (6) minutes for their Candidate’s Forum segment. If during pre-recording of the segment the candidate wishes to have a do-over, only one additional take will be permitted.**

8.5.5 **If a candidate wishes not to air either of the two takes at the time that the Forum is being recorded, that request to opt-out shall be honored, and the candidate will forfeit their time as part of the Candidate’s Forum. Candidates must express to the Oakland Television Committee Chairperson no later than one week after recording their segment that they wish to not have their segment aired,** otherwise it will be included in the program as laid out in the bylaws. If a candidate drops out of the race, their video may be removed from the Forum at the discretion of the Television Committee Chairperson, however, any replacement candidate will not be permitted to be included in the Forum to take their place.

8.5.6 Candidate’s Forum recordings will remain in the Television Committee archives, but shall also remain in a format and location easily available for the public to view for three (3) years after the Forum was recorded, at which time, it will be removed from that format at that location. If a candidate wishes to have their video removed from this format and location before the three (3) years has passed, a request must be made in writing to the Television Committee Chairperson and Vice Chairperson no earlier than the day after the applicable election has passed. The Television Committee must remove the video and notify the candidate that their request has been completed no later than two (2) weeks after receiving the request.

8.5.7 Recordings of each candidate for the Candidate’s Forum shall not be edited by the Communications Commission or the Television Committee in any way, except for adding proper titles and credits to the program.

8.5.8 **The Forum shall be made viewable to the public no earlier than the last Monday in September and shall be broadcast on Oakland TV through Election Day.** The recorded segments shall be grouped together by office sought in the order of Mayor, Borough Council, Regional High School District School Board, and Oakland Board of Education. The order of candidate appearance in each grouping shall be by alphabetical order, based on the candidate’s last name. If two or more candidates have the same last name, the order of those candidates will be determined by first name in alphabetical order.

8.5.9 The Forum’s broadcast times shall be advertised and made available for viewing through all mediums run by the OCC, for maximum public accessibility to view the Forum.

8.5.10 Candidates shall be permitted to use any portion of the Candidate’s Forum for their own campaign purposes, provided it is not misconstrued from the aired version of the Forum and that the Oakland Communications Commission and Oakland Television Committee is cited as the source of the video.

If you are interested in participating in the Candidate’s Forum, we look forward to hearing from you **on or before the August 1 deadline.** Please send us the applicable information either by mail to: **Oakland Communications Commission, ATTN: Candidates’ Forum –TV Committee, 1 Municipal Plaza, Oakland, NJ 07436** , by dropping off said paperwork at Oakland Borough Hall, or by emailing us at occ@oakland-nj.org and oaklandnjtv@gmail.com.

OFFICE USE ONLY:

Received Date: _____ / _____ / _____ Borough Clerk Signature: _____

TV Committee Chair Signature: _____ Date: _____