STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE · SEARCH, YOUTUBE & DISPLAY

Getting verified to run election ads on Google

Whether your race needs Google's election ads verification, everything your committee has to have in hand, and every step from an empty Google Ads account to an approved ad.

FROM THE TEAM BEHIND THIS GUIDE

Verification is the committee's job. We can help with everything around it.

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General information, not legal advice

THE SHORT VERSION

- **Check whether you need it first.** Google's US election ads rules cover ads that feature a federal, state or territory candidate or current officeholder, a party, or a qualified state ballot measure. Local offices aren't named — but a local ad featuring any of those is in, and some California and Virginia committees must verify whatever their race.
- **Google verifies the committee, not your staff.** One admin on its Google Ads account does the identity check with their own photo ID; an agency never verifies as itself.
- **Finish the Google Ads account and billing first.** Google rejects applications with incomplete billing. Then allow up to two review steps of up to five business days each — about two weeks.
- **The name you verify is the "Paid for by" Google shows.** Use the committee's exact legal name, matching your payments profile letter for letter.

PART 1

How Google's approval fits together

Google's process is shorter than Meta's and more document-driven. There are five links, and an election ad can't run until every one is in place:

1

A Google account

Owned by the committee — ideally on its own email domain, never a staffer's personal Gmail.

2

A Google Ads account

In the committee's name, fully set up — a regular paid account, not an Ad Grants account.

3

Billing

An Organization payments profile in the committee's exact legal name, with its own payment method — finished before you apply.

4

Election ads verification

Google checks the committee's eligibility, then an admin verifies their identity. *This is the two-week wait.*

5

Each ad

Reviewed when you submit it — most within a business day. Google attaches the "Paid for by" from your verified information.

What Google verifies is the advertiser, not the people. Meta confirms every person who touches the ads; Google verifies the organization or individual paying for them — for a campaign, almost always the committee. One authorized representative, who must be an admin on the Google Ads account, does the identity step with their own photo ID. After that, a consultant or agency can run the verified committee's ads — but Google is explicit that it's the end advertiser who must be verified, never the agency in its client's place.

Only the election ads verification counts. Google also runs a general advertiser verification program for every kind of advertiser. It's a separate program: it isn't a step toward election ads verification, and it never lets you run US election ads in the US. If Google separately asks your account to complete it, answer that request before its deadline too (Part 9) — but don't start it thinking it's the one you need.

PART 2

Does your race need it?

Google's election ads rules apply to a narrower set of ads than Meta's, and what counts is what the ad features, not who pays for it. In the US, an ad is an election ad if it features any of these:

IN SCOPE	NOT NAMED IN THE DEFINITION
A current officeholder or candidate for **federal** office	City council, mayor, county, school board, sheriff and other **local** offices
A current officeholder or candidate for **state** or US-territory office — legislators, governors, statewide officials	**Former** officeholders — an endorsement from a retired legislator, say
A federal, state or territory **political party**	Issue ads that name no candidate, officeholder, party or measure
A **state or territory ballot measure** that has qualified for the ballot	Local ballot measures

Some offices elected by county or district — trial-court judges, and in some states district attorneys — are legally state offices, and Google doesn't say how it treats them. If yours is a state office, treat your ads as in scope.

Deciding in thirty seconds

1. **Federal or state candidate, party, or a qualified state measure?** You need election ads verification. Start now.
2. **In California or Virginia?** Committees covered by California Government Code §84504.6 and advertisers covered by Virginia Code §24.2-960 must verify their Google account whatever the office, local races included (Part 7).
3. **A local race anywhere else?** The definition doesn't name local offices. But an ad that features a current state legislator, statewide official, party or qualified state measure — an endorsement, a shared slate card — is in scope, and Google's own transparency data lists

many local committees as verified election advertisers. If you're unsure, verify. It takes about two weeks, and finding out in October that you needed it costs far more.

4. **Either way,** check Part 7: Google refuses some election ads outright in several states, and in Washington and Maryland that includes state and local races.

OUTSIDE THE DEFINITION ISN'T "ANYTHING GOES"

A local campaign that doesn't need election ads verification is still bound by Google's general ad policies, its limits on targeting by political affiliation, the state rules in Part 7, and the campaign-finance law that applies to your race — including the disclaimer your law requires in the ad itself.

PART 3

The name you verify is the name Google shows

On most ad formats, Google writes the "Paid for by" disclosure itself, from the information you verified — in the ad on Search, and in the ad's "Why this ad?" panel on YouTube and display. That makes the verification form the most consequential text box in your whole Google program.

- **Use the committee's exact legal name** — letter for letter as it appears on your FEC or state registration and on the documents you upload. Not a nickname, not the candidate's name, not a "doing business as" name.
- **Make the payments profile match exactly.** Google's verification pages say your documents must match the payments profile exactly, and its election pages for other countries add "including any capitalisation or punctuation." Treat "Inc." and "Inc", "for" and "4", "&" and "and" as different names. The payments profile, the documents and the application should all say the same thing.
- **Set the payments profile to Organization.** Its account type must match how you verify: Organization for a committee, PAC, party or ballot committee; Individual only for a person verifying as themselves. Google's election pages say the type can't be changed once set and recommend a new Google Ads account if it's wrong.
- **Get it right once.** Once you're verified, you can't edit the payer name in Billing the way other advertisers can, and Google says substantial changes to the payments profile — a new legal name or account type — mean completing verification again.

GOOGLE'S LINE ISN'T YOUR LEGAL DISCLAIMER

Google says its disclosure is not a replacement for any disclaimer the law requires. Federal, state and local rules still decide what must appear in the ad itself — wording, size, and for video how long it stays on screen. On YouTube and display, Google's line isn't even on the creative. Put the legally required disclaimer in your creative; Google's line is in addition to it.

PART 4

Information checklist: what to have in hand

Gather all of this before anyone opens Google's forms. Google checks names and numbers against each other, and a rejection means resubmitting and waiting again. Write it in, and keep this page with your campaign records.

WHAT YOU NEED	YOURS
THE COMMITTEE	
Exact legal name Letter for letter as on your registration — this becomes the "Paid for by"	
FEC ID or state registration number Federal committees: the FEC ID (starts with C). State and local committees: the registration or ID number from your state elections regulator	
EIN (federal tax ID) If you'll verify with the EIN instead of an FEC or state ID, also an IRS letter showing the committee's name and EIN, such as a CP 575 or 147C — Google hasn't accepted a W-9 since 2022	
Registration paperwork, as filed The filed copy of your FEC or state statement of organization — some New Jersey and New York advertisers must also send it to Google on its state form (Part 7)	
Committee address As on your registration	
THE REPRESENTATIVE	
Who applies for the committee Must be an admin on the committee's Google Ads account — the treasurer, candidate or a senior staffer who can speak for the committee and will be around through Election Day	

WHAT YOU NEED	YOURS
Their US government-issued photo ID Unexpired, with their legal name exactly as they'll enter it	
Inbox Google will write to Google emails the result of each step and any request for more — someone must read it daily	
THE ACCOUNTS	
Committee Google account A login on the committee's own email domain — or at least an address only the committee uses — never a staffer's personal Gmail	
Google Ads Customer ID The 10-digit number at the top of the committee's own Google Ads account — never an agency's manager-account ID	
Payments profile type, legal name and payment method Organization type, in the committee's exact legal name; the committee's own card or bank account	
Your media buyer's manager account ID, if any They send it to you; you approve the link	
THE WORDS	
Legally required in-ad disclaimer Word for word from your treasurer or counsel — this goes in the creative itself	

PART 5

Task checklist, in order

Work top to bottom. Google rejects applications with incomplete billing, so the account work happens on day one.

DAY 1 — DECIDE AND GATHER

- [ ] **Confirm your race needs verification** — Campaign manager · 10 min
  A federal or state candidate, party or qualified state measure; a local campaign whose ads will feature one; or a California or Virginia committee covered by state law (Part 2).
- [ ] **Check your state's Google rules** — Campaign manager · 10 min
  Some states block these ads outright or require extra paperwork (Part 7).
- [ ] **Have an email address on the committee's own domain** — Committee · up to 1 day
  For example treasurer@yourcommittee.org, in an inbox the treasurer reads. Google's election verification doesn't itself require one, but in some accounts Google now stops Gmail and Yahoo logins from adding users or linking accounts. No domain yet? Buy one in the committee's name and set up a mailbox or forwarding. If you can't in time, use an address only the committee uses — never a staffer's own — and add a domain login as an admin later.
- [ ] **Confirm the committee's exact legal name** — Treasurer · 10 min
  From the registration — it becomes the "Paid for by."
- [ ] **Gather the documents** — Treasurer · 30 min
  Your identifier — the FEC ID, the state registration number, or the EIN with an IRS letter showing it (CP 575 or 147C, not a W-9; allow extra days if you have to ask the IRS for a 147C) — plus the filed registration paperwork and the representative's photo ID.

DAY 1 — BUILD THE ACCOUNTS

- [ ] **Create a committee Google account** — Committee · 15 min
  On the committee's own email domain, controlled by the treasurer, with two-step verification on.
- [ ] **Create the Google Ads account** — Committee · 20 min
  In the committee's name: United States, your time zone, US dollars. A regular paid account — Ad Grants accounts can't run election ads.
- [ ] **Finish billing** — Treasurer · 15 min
  An Organization payments profile in the committee's exact legal name, with the committee's card or bank account. If Google asks to verify the payment method, answer the same day.

- [ ] **Set up admins and passkeys** — Committee · 15 min
  The person who will apply must be an admin. Anyone who will add users or change billing should set up a passkey now — a new one can take up to seven days to clear.

DAY 1–2 — APPLY

- [ ] **Apply for election ads verification** — Representative · 30 min
  Google's election ads application — not the general advertiser verification — as an organization, with the Customer ID of the committee's own account.
- [ ] **If a state rule covers you, file Google's state form** — Treasurer · 20 min
  California §84504.6 committees, the New Jersey advertisers Google lists, New York independent expenditure committees and Virginia §24.2-960 advertisers: submit the form linked from your state's entry in Google's Political content policy — New Jersey's before any ad runs (Part 7).
- [ ] **Watch the inbox and the account every day** — Whoever reads the inbox · 2 weeks
  Google emails after each step. Tell the representative as soon as the identity check appears in the red bar at the top of Google Ads, and answer anything else the same day.
- [ ] **Representative completes the identity check** — Representative · 15 min
  The authorized representative — not whoever spots the red bar — signs in as an admin and verifies with their own US government-issued photo ID, entering their name exactly as on the ID.

ONCE VERIFIED — PROVE IT WORKS

- [ ] **Link your media buyer's manager account** — Committee · 5 min
  Approve their request under Access and security. You keep ownership.
- [ ] **Run one small test ad** — Media buyer · 1–2 days
  With the legally required disclaimer in the creative — through review to recorded delivery, and check its entry in the Ads Transparency Center.
- [ ] **Keep it working** — Committee · ongoing
  Keep billing current and the committee in control of the account, leave the payments profile's name and type alone, and answer any request from Google to re-verify.

PART 6

Every step, in order

Google moves its menus, so treat the paths below as what to look for. If a screen doesn't match, search Google's Advertising Policies Help for "election ads verification."

A. The accounts

1 Create a committee Google account

accounts.google.com → Create account → For work or my business

Use an address on the committee's own domain that the treasurer controls. This login will own the ad account, so it must not belong to a staffer or consultant who might leave — and in some accounts Google now stops Gmail and Yahoo logins from adding users or linking accounts. When Google offers to create a Gmail address, choose to use your existing email address instead and enter the committee's. Turn on two-step verification.

2 Create the Google Ads account

ads.google.com → Start now

Signed in as the committee account. Choose United States, your time zone and US dollars, and get them right the first time. If Google pushes you into a "smart" campaign during setup, switch to expert mode and skip creating a campaign. It must be a regular paid account: Google says Ad Grants accounts can't run election ads or apply for verification.

3 Set up billing

Google Ads → Billing → Settings

Create a payments profile of the **Organization** type (**Individual** only if a person with no committee is the advertiser and will verify as themselves), with the committee's exact legal name and address, and add the committee's card or bank account. Those two fields matter most: Google's election pages say the type can't be changed once set, and the name has to match what you verify. If Google asks you to verify the payment method, do it at once — that review can take up to five business days on its own.

4 Make the right people admins

Google Ads → Admin → Access and security

Only a Google Ads admin can complete Google's verification steps, so the person who will apply needs admin access on the committee's account. Keep the committee's own login as an admin too. Google may require a passkey before anyone adds users, changes billing or links accounts, and says a new passkey may be subject to a seven-day security delay — set them up a week before you need them.

B. Election ads verification

1 Open the election ads application

support.google.com/adspolicy/troubleshooter/9973345

Signed in to a Google account that's an admin on the committee's Google Ads account, choose to apply for election ads verification and follow the prompts to the United States form for Google Ads. The questions move around; what matters is that it's the election ads application, not the general advertiser verification, and that you enter the Customer ID of the committee's own account. If the prompts don't get you there, the US form itself is at support.google.com/adspolicy/contact/us_election_ads — sign in with the admin login first.

2 Apply as an organization

A committee, PAC, party or ballot committee applies as an organization, with an Organization payments profile to match. Only a person verifying as themselves — a candidate with no committee, say — applies as an individual.

3 Enter the organization's details

The committee's exact legal name and address, and one identifier: the FEC ID for federal committees, the state elections regulator's registration or ID number for state and local committees, or the EIN. On the EIN route, upload an IRS-issued letter showing the committee's name and EIN — a CP 575 or 147C; Google stopped accepting W-9s in 2022. On the FEC-ID route, trade reports on Google's 2022 changes say the email on the application must match the one on your FEC Statement of Organization; we couldn't confirm that on a Google page, but check it before you apply. Upload documents exactly as filed.

4 File any state form, alongside the application

If you're a California §84504.6 committee, one of the New Jersey advertisers Google lists, a New York independent expenditure committee or a Virginia §24.2-960 advertiser, submit the form linked from your state's entry in Google's Political content policy. It's separate from the election ads application, and New Jersey's must be done before any ad runs (Part 7).

5 Verify the representative

Once Google has checked eligibility, expect an email and a red bar at the top of the Google Ads account that walks an admin through identity verification. The authorized representative completes it with their own US government-issued photo ID, entering their name exactly as it appears on the ID.

6 Wait, and answer fast

Google says each step can take up to five business days, and it emails the status after each one — sometimes asking for more. Reply the same day. We couldn't confirm whether Google gives US applicants a deadline to respond (its pages for India give 60 days to finish the identity step), so treat every request as urgent: every day it sits is a day your review isn't moving.

7 Check the result

Once approved, your account can run US election ads. Google reviews each ad as you submit it — most within one business day — and attaches the "Paid for by" from your verified information.

C. Before launch

1 Give your media buyer access

Google Ads → Admin → Access and security → Managers

Approve the link request from their manager account. They run the ads inside your account; you can unlink them at any time.

2 Build a test ad the way the real ones will run

Only geography, age, gender and contextual targeting (Part 10). Put your legally required disclaimer in the creative, and tick "Altered or synthetic content" if the ad needs it. Google also asks each new campaign whether it contains EU political advertising; a US campaign answers no — that question is about EU rules, not your US verification.

3 Run it small, all the way through

A few dollars for a day. Confirm it's approved, it delivers, and it appears under your committee's name in the Ads Transparency Center.

PART 7

State and local rules

Google refuses some election advertising outright under state law, and asks for extra paperwork in other states. Where a state asks for paperwork, that state's entry in Google's Political content policy links its own form, separate from the election ads application. This is the list as the latest full copy of that policy we could review (December 2025) gives it; searches of Google's help

pages in September 2026 turned up the same states. Confirm it hasn't changed before you budget a dollar:

WHERE	WHAT GOOGLE DOES
Washington	Does not allow ads related to ballot measures and candidates for state and local elections.
Maryland	Does not allow ads related to ballot measures and candidates for state and local elections.
Idaho, Nevada	Do not allow ads related to ballot measures and candidates for local elections.
New Jersey	Does not allow ads related to ballot measures and candidates for local elections. Committees, and other groups or people paying for covered New Jersey political communications, must also submit the statement of registration New Jersey requires them to file with the Election Law Enforcement Commission — and Google says that must be done before running any ads.
California	Committees covered by Government Code §84504.6 that buy "online platform disclosed advertisements" about California candidates or measures, local ones included, must notify Google, submit more information, and verify their account. Their disclosure appears through the ad's "Why this ad" icon, and they can't opt out.
New York	Independent expenditure committees buying ads about New York state or local candidates or measures must tell Google and submit their State Board of Elections registration documents.
Virginia	Advertisers covered by Virginia Code §24.2-960 must identify themselves, certify they're legally permitted to buy online political ads, and verify their account.
Seattle	A broader prohibition: no ads appealing for votes or support in an election, and none on local political matters, including legislation or an official's position on it.

Everywhere, Google also requires election ads to follow the election law of every area they target — including any legally mandated "silence period" before a vote.

PART 8

Mistakes that stall campaigns

THE MISTAKE	WHAT HAPPENS	HOW TO AVOID IT
Applying before billing is finished	The application is rejected; you resubmit and wait again.	Complete the payments profile and payment method first.
Using an Ad Grants account	Not eligible for election ads or for verification.	A regular paid Google Ads account in the committee's name.
A payments profile set up as Individual	It doesn't match a committee's verification, and Google's election pages say the type can't be changed.	Choose Organization when you set up billing.
Doing only the general advertiser verification	It's a separate program; it never lets you run US election ads in the US.	Use the election ads application (Part 6).

THE MISTAKE	WHAT HAPPENS	HOW TO AVOID IT
Names that don't match	Google can reject the application, and you resubmit and wait again.	One spelling of the legal name everywhere, down to punctuation: registration, documents, payments profile, application.
Verifying a nickname or DBA	The wrong name becomes your "Paid for by" — and fixing it means verifying again.	Verify the committee's exact legal name.
Uploading a W-9	Google hasn't accepted W-9s since 2022.	An IRS letter showing the name and EIN — a CP 575 or 147C.
The account lives in a staffer's Gmail	When they leave, the account — and its history — leaves with them. In some accounts a Gmail login can't even add users.	A committee-owned login on the committee's domain from day one.
The agency verifies itself, or enters its manager-account ID	It doesn't cover your committee's ads.	The committee verifies with its own account's Customer ID; the agency links a manager account.
Nobody reads Google's emails	A request for more documents sits, and so does your application.	Name one person to check the inbox and the account daily until you're approved.
Editing the payments profile after approval	A new legal name or account type means verifying again.	Settle the name and type before you apply.
Planning Meta-style targeting	Customer lists, remarketing, audience segments and radius targeting aren't allowed for election ads.	Build the Google plan on geography and context (Part 10).
Treating Google's line as the legal disclaimer	An ad that passes review but breaks your state's disclaimer law.	Put the legally required disclaimer in the creative.
Starting in October	No time for a rejection or a request for more documents.	Start the day you decide to run Google ads.

PART 9

Fixing it after the fact

You verified the wrong name

Google treats a substantial change to the payments profile — a new legal name or account type — as a new verification, and a verified advertiser can't simply edit the payer name in Billing. Apply again with the committee's exact legal name and matching documents, and plan for the same review time. Ads that already ran stay in the Ads Transparency Center.

The payments profile is the wrong type

Google's election pages recommend opening a new Google Ads account with an Organization profile. A newer Google Ads help article describes a one-time switch of the account type

instead. Either way, expect to verify again.

The account is in someone else's login

Add the committee's Google account as an administrator — with a passkey ready, since Google may require one to add users — confirm it can see billing and the verification, then remove the departing person. Do it before they leave, not after.

The application was rejected

Read Google's email for what it flags. Then check the usual causes before you resubmit: billing incomplete, a payments profile of the wrong type or with a differently spelled name, a document that doesn't show both the committee's name and its identifier, or the wrong Customer ID. Fix everything you find, and resubmit once, carefully.

Google asked for advertiser verification too

That's Google's general program, and it can require it of any account by notice. It runs on its own clock — 30 days to answer the "About your business" questions, then another 30 days to finish — and Google pauses the account if a deadline passes; it says the deadlines can't be extended. Complete it as well. It doesn't replace the election ads verification.

You're a local campaign and an ad was flagged as an election ad

If the ad features a current state or federal officeholder or candidate, a party or a qualified state measure, it's in scope. Either verify the committee or remove that element from the ad. If it features none of those, check Part 7 first — Google refuses local election ads outright in some states. Otherwise ask Google to review the ad again, or edit the ad, which resubmits it for review.

Your first election ad was disapproved

Open the ad's status in Google Ads to see which policy it cites. If it's the election ads policy, check that the ad is in the account you verified — the Customer ID you applied with — and that verification shows as complete. If the ad inauthentically depicts real or realistic-looking people or events, make sure "Altered or synthetic content" is ticked. Fix the cause, then edit the ad, which resubmits it, or ask Google to review it again. Most ads are reviewed within a business day.

PART 10

Once you're verified: the rules that still apply

- **Targeting is limited.** Election ads can be targeted only by geography (not a radius around a point), age, gender, and context — placements, topics and keywords. Google names what's out: its audience products, remarketing, Customer Match and other uploaded lists, and third-party audiences. Geography goes down to ZIP codes, and Google offers US congressional districts as location targets; for a state-legislative, county or school-board district, build an approximation from ZIP codes and cities. Plan from geography and context: search ads on

both candidates' names, YouTube by district geography, display on the local news your voters read.

- **Google writes the "Paid for by" on most formats.** On Search it's in the ad; on YouTube and display it's in the "Why this ad?" panel. For some formats — third-party-served ads on the Display Network and YouTube, audio ads on YouTube, and audio, native and non-YouTube video creatives in Display & Video 360 — you must put "Paid for by" and the payer's name in the creative yourself, visible the whole time, or in audio at the same pace and tone as the rest of the ad.
- **Disclose synthetic or altered media.** If an ad inauthentically depicts real or realistic-looking people or events, tick "Altered or synthetic content" in the campaign settings. Google generates the label itself only for ads in feeds and Shorts on mobile phones and for in-stream video; for every other format — including feeds and Shorts on computers and TV screens — you must also put a clear, prominent disclosure in the creative. Routine edits — resizing, cropping, color correction — don't count. Google's general AI-label setting, rolled out in July 2026, is a separate tool and doesn't replace the checkbox.
- **Everything is public.** Every election ad appears in Google's Ads Transparency Center with its creative, your verified name, a spend range, an impressions range, the dates it ran, and its age, gender and location targeting — kept for seven years. Reporters and your opponent will read it, and you can read theirs.
- **Display is changing.** Google is moving display campaigns into Demand Gen, where sensitive categories such as political content generally serve on YouTube only. If your plan leans on display, check what Google will actually sell you before you budget it.
- **Your legal disclaimer still goes in the ad.** Google's line doesn't replace what federal, state or local law requires.
- **Breaking the rules costs more than one ad.** Google can revoke the verification, suspend the account, and disclose information about your account and ads publicly or to government regulators.

PART 11

The 2026 calendar

Working backward from the November 3, 2026 general election:

BY	WHAT MUST BE TRUE
After polls close	Plan for a pause. After the polls closed in 2020, Google paused ads about the election until December 10; in 2024 it paused election ads and ads about the election until November 11. We found no Google announcement for 2026 as of September 25 — have your website, email and texting ready to carry the message if it happens again.
Nov 3	Election Day. As of this writing Google has announced no freeze on new ads before it — confirm in October. Any silence period the law sets where you target still applies.
Mid-October	Your closing ads approved and delivering, with room for a rejection.
Early October at the latest	Verified, and a test ad has run.
Two to three weeks before your first ad	Accounts built, billing complete, admins and passkeys set up, election ads verification submitted. Two weeks is the normal case; a payment-method check or a new passkey can add a week.

WANT SOMEONE TO RUN IT ONCE YOU'RE VERIFIED

Verification is the committee's job; running the ads doesn't have to be. Managed media buying through Plurality Media, a BlueList company, puts a strategist on your ads inside your own account — you keep ownership, and you can remove access at any time. Running Facebook and Instagram too? Our Meta verification guide covers that side.

QUESTIONS

Questions we get

Does my city council or school board race need election ads verification?

Often not, but check. Google's US definition covers ads featuring federal, state and territory candidates and current officeholders, political parties, and qualified state or territory ballot measures — it doesn't name local offices. But a local ad that features any of those is in scope, some California and Virginia committees must verify whatever the office, and several states restrict election ads on Google for local races too. If you're unsure, verify.

Can our agency get verified for us?

Not as itself. Google verifies the end advertiser — for a campaign, the committee — and says an agency advertising for a client should verify as that client, never as itself. Either way the application is in the committee's exact legal name, with the committee's own Google Ads Customer ID. We recommend someone at the committee do it; once it's verified, the agency can manage the ads through a linked manager account.

How long does Google election ads verification take?

Budget about two weeks. Google says verification can involve two steps of up to five business days each; a payment-method check or a new passkey can add a week. Finish the Google Ads account and billing before you apply — Google rejects applications with incomplete billing — and answer Google's emails the same day.

What name will appear on our Google ads?

The name you verified. On most formats Google generates the "Paid for by" disclosure from your verification information — in the ad on Search, and in the "Why this ad?" panel on YouTube and display. Verify the committee's exact legal name, matching your payments profile; changing it later means verifying again.

Can we use our donor list or retarget website visitors on Google?

Not for election ads. Google limits election ad targeting to geography, age, gender and context such as keywords, topics and placements. Customer Match lists, remarketing, audience segments and radius targeting aren't allowed.

Does Google's "Paid for by" line satisfy our state's disclaimer law?

No. Google says its disclosure doesn't replace any disclaimer the law requires. Put the legally required disclaimer in the ad itself.

SOURCES

What this guide was checked against

- Google Advertising Policies Help — Political content (definition, targeting, disclosures, synthetic content, state rules)
- Google — Apply for election ads verification and its US identifier options
- Google Advertising Policies Help — payer names for election advertisers, advertiser verification and its deadlines
- Google Ads Help — payment method verification, passkeys, changing the payments account type and targeting US congressional districts
- Google Advertising Policies Help — Updates to AI labeling requirements (July 2026)
- Google Ads Transparency Center — political advertising
- Google's post-election pauses: 2024, lifted November 11, and 2020, lifted December 10
- Federal Election Commission — Advertising and disclaimers

Google changes this process without notice. Plurality Media publishes this guide as general information for campaigns, not legal advice. It reflects Google's published requirements as far as we could confirm them by September 25, 2026; some Google pages could be reviewed only from earlier copies or search excerpts. Google's screens, accepted documents, review times and state restrictions change on Google's schedule, and we had found no announced 2026 post-election pause at the time of writing. Before you spend money, confirm the current requirements in Google's own help pages, and confirm your disclaimer wording with your treasurer or counsel.

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