Decide to Run Checklist ✅

Use this checklist to determine whether you are ready to commit to a specific race. Move through each section carefully and check off each item once completed.

☐ Clarified Personal "Why"

You can clearly articulate why you are running and what is pulling you toward public service.

Complete the following:

- The moment I first considered running was when: _____
- The issue that most motivates me is: _____
- The people I most want to represent are: _____

You can confidently state your reason for running in 1–2 sentences.

☐ Defined the Core Problem

You have identified the specific problem you are running to solve, who it impacts, and why it hasn't been adequately addressed.

Write your problem statement:

"I am running because _____ is harming _____, and it hasn't been fixed because _____."

You understand what would meaningfully change if you won.

☐ Envisioned Success Clearly

You have defined what success looks like — both electorally and in terms of long-term impact.

Complete the following:

- If I win, in two years I will have: _____
- If I lose, this campaign will still have built: _____
- A meaningful outcome for me would be: _____

You understand what makes this effort worthwhile.

☐ Evaluated Personal Readiness

You have assessed the real commitment required and how it will affect your life.

Consider:

- Hours per week I can realistically commit: ___
- Major time conflicts I must manage: _____
- Initial financial investment I can tolerate: $___
- Emotional stress tolerance (1–10): ___

You have considered the impact on work, finances, family, and reputation.

☐ Discussed With Key Supporters

You have spoken with the people most affected by this decision (family, partner, close advisors).

You understand:

- Their concerns
- Their level of support
- What boundaries you may need to set

You are not making this decision in isolation.

☐ Assessed Resilience & Capacity

You understand that campaigning includes rejection, criticism, fundraising pressure, and public visibility.

Rate yourself (1–5):

- I can handle rejection. ___
- I can talk to strangers comfortably. ___
- I can ask people for money. ___
- I can manage criticism publicly. ___

You have identified where you may need growth or support.

☐ Identified the Specific Office

You have selected the office you are considering and confirmed basic eligibility requirements.

- Office: _____
- District: _____
- Incumbent (if any): _____

You can explain why this race is the right fit for your experience and community ties.

☐ Completed the 10-Voter Test

You have spoken with at least 10 potential voters about your possible candidacy and asked:

"If I ran for this office, what would you want me to focus on?"

After those conversations:

- I felt more energized / more uncertain (circle one)
- The top issues I heard were: _____
- I learned: _____

You have tested your interest in the real world, not just in your head.

☐ Set a Firm Decision Deadline

You have chosen a specific date to finalize your decision.

Decision Date: _____

You are not allowing indefinite hesitation.

☐ Made the Decision

☐ I am running.
☐ I am not running at this time.
☐ I will gather additional information for no more than 30 days.

If running:

Race: _____
First concrete action I will take: _____

Signature: _____
Date: _____

Before moving forward:

If you can check these boxes honestly and confidently, you are ready to move to the next milestone.