



LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

BRENT TESKE, Commissioner
District 1, Libby

JIM HAMMONS, Commissioner
District 2, Troy

NOEL DURAM, Commissioner
District 3, Eureka

NOTICE OF VACANCY AND CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Justice of the Peace, Lincoln County, Montana

Applications due by 5:00 P.M., Friday, October 23, 2026

Applications close	5:00 P.M., Friday, October 23, 2026, at the office of the Clerk and Recorder
Vacancy occurs	5:00 P.M., Friday, November 20, 2026, on the retirement of the incumbent
Appointment begins	5:01 P.M., Friday, November 20, 2026
Appointment expected to end	December 31, 2028, when a successor elected at the November 2028 general election qualifies

THE VACANCY

The Lincoln County Board of County Commissioners invites applications from qualified persons for appointment to the office of Justice of the Peace. The office will become vacant upon the retirement of the Honorable Jay Sheffield, effective 5:00 P.M. on Friday, November 20, 2026.

The Board fills a vacancy in the office of Justice of the Peace by appointment under MCA 3-10-206 and MCA 7-4-2206.

TERM OF THE APPOINTMENT

Remainder of the current term. The appointee will serve from 5:01 P.M. on November 20, 2026 through December 31, 2026, the end of the current term. Because the vacancy occurs after July 31 of the second year of the term, no election is held to fill it. *MCA 7-4-2206(4)*.

Term beginning January 1, 2027. The incumbent is a candidate for the term beginning January 1, 2027. If the incumbent is retained and does not take office, that term will also be vacant, and the Board will appoint the person selected under this notice to fill it. No separate application will be required. *MCA 3-10-206; 7-4-2205; 7-4-2206*.

Election in 2028. An appointment to the term beginning January 1, 2027 lasts until a successor is elected at the November 2028 general election and qualifies, which is expected to be December 31, 2028. The person elected in 2028 completes the term ending December 31, 2030. An appointee who wishes to continue in office must file and stand for election in 2028 on the nonpartisan judicial ballot. *MCA 3-10-201(2); 7-4-2206(2)(a), (3)*.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR APPOINTMENT

An applicant must meet each of the following requirements of Montana law.

- 1. Citizenship.** The applicant must be a citizen of the United States. *MCA 3-10-204(2)*.
- 2. Residence before appointment.** The applicant must have resided in Lincoln County for one year before appointment. *MCA 3-10-204(2)*.

- 3. Residence while in office.** The Justice of the Peace must reside in the county in which the justice's court is held. *MCA 3-10-204(1).*

REQUIREMENTS BEFORE THE APPOINTEE IS SEATED

No applicant shall be seated unless the applicant has first completed all training and met every requirement for the office under the Montana Code Annotated.

- 4. Training and certification.** The appointee must complete the course of education and training prescribed by the Commission on Courts of Limited Jurisdiction, established by the Montana Supreme Court, and file the certificate of completion with the Lincoln County Clerk and Recorder. A judge may not assume the functions of the office until the certificate is filed. *MCA 3-1-1501; 3-1-1502.*
- 5. Temporary certificate.** The Commission may issue a temporary certificate allowing an appointee to take office before completing the course, but only if the appointee is appointed after the course is offered, or is excused for personal illness, a death in the family, or other good cause. The Board will notify the Commission of its appointee. The appointee must hold a full or temporary certificate before assuming office. *MCA 3-1-1503.*
- 6. Oath of office.** After receiving the certificate of appointment and before entering on the duties of the office, the appointee must take the constitutional oath of office. The appointee must show proof of certification to the Clerk and Recorder before the oath may be filed. *MCA 3-10-202.*

CONTINUING REQUIREMENTS OF THE OFFICE

- 7. Orientation course.** A training course is offered under Supreme Court supervision as soon as practical after each general election. *MCA 3-10-203(1).*
- 8. Annual training.** Every Justice of the Peace, elected or appointed, must attend two annual training sessions supervised by the Supreme Court. Failure to attend disqualifies the justice from office and creates a vacancy, unless the Supreme Court excuses the absence for illness, a death in the family, or other good cause. *MCA 3-10-203(2), (3).*

Lincoln County pays the travel, registration and materials costs of the orientation course and the annual training sessions. *MCA 3-10-203(1), (2).*

HOW TO APPLY

Submit a letter of interest and a résumé describing your qualifications for the office, including a statement of your citizenship and of your residence in Lincoln County, to:

Lincoln County Clerk and Recorder
512 California Avenue, Libby, Montana 59923

Applications must be received by 5:00 P.M. on Friday, October 23, 2026. Applications received after that time will not be considered. The Board will make the appointment at a public meeting.

Questions regarding this notice should be directed to Matthew A. Williams, County Administrator, Lincoln County, 512 California Avenue, Libby, Montana 59923, (406) 283-2319.

Dated October 14, 2026.

LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Brent Teske, District 1

Jim Hammons, District 2

Noel Duram, District 3