



COUNTY GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE ELECTION

Craighead County Election to Combine Elected Offices of Treasurer and Tax Collector

ELECTION DATE: Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2026

What is on the ballot?

Craighead County's Quorum Court voted to put the question of reorganizing county government on the Nov. 3, 2026, ballot. Specifically, voters are being asked to approve combining the duties of county treasurer and tax collector into one elected position. If approved a single elected official would be sworn in as Collector/Treasurer in January 2031.

When is the election and where can I vote?

Early Voting for the 2026 General Election starts Oct. 19 and continues through Nov. 2. Early voting will be available at the Election Annex, 315 W. Jefferson St., in Jonesboro, and at Lake City Eastern Annex, 113 Cobean Blvd., in Lake City. Early voting will be available from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday; 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays; and from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 2. Election Day is Nov. 3. Voting locations will be open from 7:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Registered voters who live in Craighead County are eligible to vote. Voters can check their status and find out where they are supposed to vote by calling the Craighead County Clerk's Office at (870) 933-4520. You can also check your voter registration status online at www.voterview.ar-nova.org.

PUBLIC POLICY CENTER

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QUICK LOOK: What does your vote mean?

FOR: A FOR vote on this question means you are in favor of consolidating the two elected positions into one. The role of tax collector and treasurer would be combined starting in 2031. Voters would elect only one person for this role.

AGAINST: An AGAINST vote on this question means you do not want to consolidate the elected positions of tax collector and county treasurer into one position. They would remain separate elected positions.

Exercising your voting privilege:

We live in a democratic society where voting is a privilege of citizenship. Democracy works best when informed citizens exercise their voting privilege. Early voting begins Oct. 19, 2026. Election Day for this issue is Nov. 3, 2026. **Please exercise your right to vote on this issue.**

The following statements are examples of what supporters and opponents have made public in media statements, campaign literature, social media, on websites, or interviews with Public Policy Center staff. The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture does not endorse or validate these statements.

What do supporters say?

- With today's technology and the efficiencies, it provides, we can streamline the process and do the same work more effectively. Using software that connects the collections and disbursement processes, one elected official could oversee the entire operation.
- This reorganization would allow Craighead County to be more responsive to the needs of the people we serve by consolidating these offices.
- Consolidation would be consistent with practices in several other Arkansas counties. The existing checks and balances, including two-signature checks, oversight, and state audits, would remain in place.
- If you put it all under one roof, then you've got one elected official, along with the deputies and chief deputies authorized by this court, responsible for taking in the money, receiving it, and sending out the checks. That just takes one more step out of the process and removes one more risk for the entities receiving those tax dollars.

What do opponents say?

- Just because some other counties have done this, doesn't mean ours should.
- There is no evidence that combining these positions will be more efficient.
- The first word that comes to mind is that it's risky. Can it be done? Yes – we've seen other counties do it. I know we all keep seeing more and more headlines of public funds being stolen and that's why I have pause in this regard. We're talking hundreds of millions of taxpayers' dollars every year under one office. We need these checks and balances in place to safeguard the county's funds.
- If this combination does take place, it would be very wise to hire an internal auditor. However, that would cost the county much more than it would save the county in the consolidation. The Collector's Office salaries and expenses that are paid from the County General Fund are 100 percent reimbursed – roughly 80 percent of that reimbursement is by our schools.

Why is this issue on the ballot?

Amendment 55 of the Arkansas Constitution allows quorum courts to create, consolidate, separate, revise, or abandon any elective county office but requires voter approval during a general election.

During quorum court meetings in 2025, the county judge and quorum court members discussed the idea of combining the two elected positions into one. Quorum court members, at their February 9, 2026 meeting, voted 8-5 to refer the proposal to combine positions to voters to decide in the general election this November.

What is the role of a county treasurer?

The county treasurer is one of nine executives in county government and has direct oversight of office employees. The county treasurer serves a four-year term and is responsible for:

- Receiving property tax payments from the county tax collector and distributing the money to cities, schools and other entities that receive tax funds.
- Receiving county sales tax dollars and tracking what county funds those dollars go into.
- Serving as the county's investment officer and ensures county funds are banked where the money can earn interest.
- Keeping the county's financial records (aka checkbook).
- Presenting the county's financial status and income and expense reports every month at the Quorum Court meeting.

In some counties, this person might provide other county officials advice on planning the county budget. For 2026, the Craighead County Quorum Court approved a \$59.8 million budget.

To run for this office, a person must be a United States citizen, at least 18 years old, registered to vote in the county, and not have any fraud or felony convictions.

In Craighead County, the salary for county treasurer is \$103,416.75, according to County Judge's Office. This amount does not include

benefits such as health insurance and retirement. The treasurer oversees two employees.

For 2026, the treasurer oversees a General Fund budget of \$246,922 and an Automation Fund of \$105,814. County treasurers can collect a commission to offset costs, and up to 10% of that commission is deposited into the Automation Fund for office use.

What is the role of a county tax collector?

The county collector is one of nine executives in county government and has direct oversight of office employees. The collector serves a four-year term and is responsible for:

- Sending out tax bills to all property owners in the county.
- Collecting tax payments owed to county, city, school, and improvement districts.
- Turning over the tax payments to the county treasurer every month.
- Preparing a list every year of people who haven't paid their taxes to publish in the newspaper.

To run for this office, a person must be a United States citizen, at least 18 years old, registered to vote in the county, and not have any fraud or felony convictions.

In Craighead County, the current salary for county tax collector is \$103,416.75, according to County Judge's

Office. This amount does not include benefits such as health insurance and retirement. The tax collector oversees nine employees.

For 2026, the tax collector has a General Fund budget of \$532,760 and an Automation Fund of \$503,646. County tax collectors can collect a commission to offset costs, and up to 10% of that commission can be deposited into the Automation Fund for office use.

What would combining the offices mean?

Consolidating the duties of both offices would result in one elected official managing the offices of treasurer and tax collector. There would still be a separate budget for each office, and the automation funds would remain separate. County officials at their February quorum court meeting discussed how they may need to hire an internal auditor if the positions are combined, which may affect any potential cost savings from combining the position.

How many counties in Arkansas have a combined tax collector/treasurer position?

According to an analysis conducted by the Public Policy Center in 2023, five of the 75 counties in Arkansas had combined their collector and treasurer position at some time in the past. Those counties are Johnson, Lafayette, Monroe, Pulaski, and Sebastian.

The following is the official wording for the local option question as it will appear on the ballot.

ALL DUTIES OF THE TREASURER FOR CRAIGHEAD COUNTY, ARKANSAS, SHALL BE CONSOLIDATED TO THE OFFICE OF THE COLLECTOR, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2031. THESE DUTIES, INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: THE CUSTODY AND DISBURSEMENT OF ALL COUNTY FUNDS AND SCHOOL DISTRICT FUNDS, KEEPING ACCURATE AND DETAILED ACCOUNT OF ALL RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS OF THE COUNTY, AND PROVIDING MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS TO THE QUORUM COURT ON THE FISCAL CONDITION OF THE COUNTY.

FOR ☐

AGAINST ☐

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Conflict of interest: This fact sheet was prepared to provide the citizens of Craighead County with information to help them in making an informed choice on Election Day. An effort has been made to ensure the information is presented in a fair and balanced way that best represents the facts associated with this ballot issue. As part of this effort, we are obligated to divulge potential conflicts of interest and to recognize their influence on the educational programs and matter we produce. The University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture and Craighead County Extension Office are partially funded by state and county general funds. As such, any laws affecting revenues of the state or county has the potential to affect county and state extension programs. In providing this information, the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture and the Craighead County Extension Office are not advocating for or against this ballot initiative.