

**§ 120-10.3. Initiating a contest.**

(a) Who May Initiate. – A contest may be initiated only by a contestant by the filing of a written notice of the intent to petition for a contest in accordance with this section.

(b) When May Initiate. – The notice of intent may be filed no earlier than the date provided in G.S. 163-182.5 for the canvass by the board of elections with jurisdiction for the office under G.S. 163-182.4. The notice of intent must be filed no later than the latter of: (i) 10 days after a certificate of election has been issued, or (ii) 10 days after the conclusion of the election protest procedure under Article 15A of Chapter 163 of the General Statutes, but in no event may a contestant initiate a contest later than 30 days after the convening of a regular or special session of the General Assembly next after the election.

(c) Content of Notice. – A notice of intent shall state the grounds for the contest. The grounds shall be either or both of the following:

- (1) Objections to the eligibility or qualifications of the contestee as a candidate in the election based on specific allegations.
- (2) Objections to the conduct or results of the election accompanied by specific allegations that if proven true would have a probable impact on the outcome of the election.

The notice of intent shall also state that a contestee shall file an answer to the notice of intent in accordance with G.S. 120-10.4. The notice of intent shall be signed by the contestant and shall be verified in accordance with Rule 11(b) of the Rules of Civil Procedure. (2005-3, s. 2; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, ss. 3.1(a), (b), 6.1.)