



**PROGRESSIVE MASSACHUSETTS**  
**2024 County Office**  
QUESTIONNAIRE

**Candidate:** Maria Curtatone

**Office Sought:** Middlesex-Southern Register of Deeds

**Party:** Democratic

**Website:** <https://mariacurtatone.com/>

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## **About Your Candidacy**

### **1. Why are you running for this office? What are your top three priorities if elected?**

Public service is very important to me. From an early age, my parents encouraged me to work hard and help others. In 1956 my parents immigrated from Italy to Cambridge. They settled in Somerville where I was raised and still reside. Before becoming elected as Southern Middlesex Register of Deeds, I built a prominent law practice. I worked very hard while also raising my two children as a single mom, but also felt the need to do more to help others. I decided that I could do more by committing myself to public service. Since 2013 I have applied my unique qualifications and experience to represent and assist the great constituents of Southern Middlesex County.

My priorities here at the Registry of Deeds are:

(1) Customer service while continuing to advance the relationship between history and modern technology and protection of recorded documents.

The Registry offers online searching and viewing of recorded documents – free of charge. Electronic recording is also available with safeguards. We also continue to encourage folks to come to the Registry to search our books and records in-person AND to record documents in-person, where you can still speak with a recorder and address questions or concerns on-the-spot. In the alternative, constituents may call or email the Registry for remote assistance. Calls and emails are immediately addressed. Customer service is a priority.

(2) Continue to support a positive and productive workspace and foster an environment of inclusion and acceptance of employees of all backgrounds.

Public entities are more productive, effective and useful when diverse staff contribute. Decisions are made after considering a broad array of viewpoints and ideas. When we create an environment of positivity and acceptance, the outcome is efficiency and productivity. The Registry's turnaround time for recording recorded land documents is same-day, whether documents are emailed, mailed in or delivered in-hand.

(3) Integrate electronic recording for registered land documents.

Electronic recording of recorded land documents has been integrated and used here at the Registry for quite some time. I have advocated for and have now been approved for the implementation of electronic recording in registered land. With the increase in folks working from home and the legislature and general public becoming more accepting of electronic documents and signatures, the time has come. Staff has been trained; and we anticipate that the Information Technology ("IT") folks will roll out registered land electronic recording, in the next few months.

## **2. What prepares you to serve in this office?**

My educational background and my years of experience have prepared me to serve in this office. I have been serving as the Southern Middlesex Register of Deeds since 2013.

I graduated law school in 1988. Shortly thereafter, I opened my own law office and built a prominent practice. I am a member of the Massachusetts Bar Association, United States District Court, United States Court of Appeals and the United States Supreme Court. I am also Assistant Recorder of the Land Court. My legal background, my attention to detail and my skills in leading, managing, speaking and advocating, provide me with a strong foundation for my position as the Register of Deeds.

## **3. What do you think are the most significant challenges facing the office, and how do you intend to address those challenges?**

The most significant factor in effecting a well-run Registry is adapting to everyday change. Registry personnel work hard. Staff is cross-trained, educated and informed when Massachusetts laws, standards and guidelines change. It is also important to keep constituents informed. I am educated and experienced in real estate law, and continue to stay up-to-date on bills, laws and cases that may impact real estate law in Massachusetts. We also coordinate with other Registries across the Commonwealth to make certain that we are applying the most up-to-date standards and procedures.

## **4. What progressive policies or programs will you implement if elected?**

I am the current Southern Middlesex Register and have implemented new and current policies and guidelines created by the Secretary of the Commonwealth. The policies promote a healthy work environment that include diversity and inclusion, while having a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination, harassment and bullying. I am tri-lingual and have a diverse, multi-lingual staff at the Registry. All constituents are treated with fairness and equity.

5. (If an incumbent) What are your proudest accomplishments in the office to date?

- Consumer Alerts to protect constituents from potentially costly solicitations and unauthorized recordings
- Digitization and online availability of ALL Recorded Land books and Registered Land case plans
- Safe guidelines for employees and constituents while recording 221,549 documents during COVID-19
- Tackling head-on registered land certificate writing by writing 26,000 certificates and creating a day-current system
- A new mobile optimized website with same day responses to inquiries Homestead informational sessions to educate constituents
- Centralized scanning and expedited document return time
- Support the preservation of historic Registry building in a location accessible by public transportation; encourage alternate transportation, including installing bicycle racks

## **6. Why should people care about this election and this office?**

Constituents of Southern Middlesex should be extremely concerned about this election. People's homes and investment properties are of critical importance. The office of the Register is responsible for the recording, indexing and safe-keeping of records related to real property, including deeds, mortgages, plans, liens, trust documents, mortgage discharges, land use permits, Conservation Commission orders, leases, and more.

The recording and keeping of these records require knowledge of the laws, standards and guidelines implemented to safeguard homeowners, consumers and constituents from negligent or nefarious actions of others. Legal background and experience in real estate law is invaluable to safeguarding documents to the fullest extent possible under the law.

The Register offers a consumer protection alert service for homeowners, notifying them of Registry activity related to their home. Registry staff also reviews the Registry Index after documents are recorded. This provides an additional layer of protection for recorded documents.

## **7. If a voter asked you what this office does, how would you answer (in no more than 3 sentences)?**

The Southern Middlesex Registry of Deeds is a keeper of records related to real property in its District. That means we accept documents for recording that meet

legal requirements as set out in the Massachusetts General Laws, the rules of the Land Court (for registered land documents) and the rules of the Southern Middlesex Registry, all as interpreted by the Register of Deeds. Recorded documents become part of the public record in order to put the world on notice of potential interests in property within the District.

**8. (As Relevant) What do you view as the role of county government in Massachusetts? To what extent would you like to see it expanded or limited?**

The Southern Middlesex Registry of Deeds serves the following 44 cities and towns: Acton | Arlington | Ashby | Ashland | Ayer | Bedford | Belmont | Boxborough | Burlington | Cambridge | Concord | Everett | Framingham | Groton | Holliston | Hopkinton | Hudson | Lexington | Lincoln | Littleton | Malden | Marlborough | Maynard | Medford | Melrose | Natick | Newton | North Reading | Pepperell | Reading | Sherborn | Shirley | Somerville | Stoneham | Stow | Sudbury | Townsend | Wakefield | Waltham | Watertown | Wayland | Weston | Winchester | Woburn  
Southern Middlesex is under the purview of the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. It is not run or overseen by county government.