
2016 Primary Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Primary Election?

- Colorado holds Primary Elections in June and General Elections in November of even-numbered years.
- In the Primary Election, voters affiliated with political parties cast a ballot for their party's candidate for each office. The winning candidate from each party is placed on the November General Election ballot and is considered that party's nominee.

Does the winning candidate in the Primary Election hold office?

No. The winning candidate in the Primary Election must face other candidates in the November General Election. Whoever wins in November holds office.

Do all Political Parties participate in the Primary Election?

In Colorado, by law, all major political parties (which in 2016 are the Democratic and Republican parties) must participate even if there are no candidates for offices and/or no competitive races. This means the County Clerk is still required to issue a ballot to any registered voter in that party for that Primary Election. Minor political parties only participate if they have more than one candidate running for the same office. In Boulder County, no minor parties have competitive primaries for 2016.

Who can vote in a Primary Election?

Active eligible registered voters in Colorado that meet certain party affiliation requirements may vote in the Primary Election. To see if you are a registered voter or to review your party affiliation, use our [Voter Look-up tool](#).

Do I have to be affiliated with a political party to vote in the Primary Election?

- Yes. Only voters affiliated with a participating political party can vote in the Primary Election.
- If you are an unaffiliated voter, you can affiliate with a participating political party up to and including Primary Election Day, June 28, 2016.

Can I vote in a different party's Primary Election?

No. Tuesday, May 31 was the last day for voters who are affiliated with a political party to change or withdraw their affiliation if they wished to vote in a different party's primary election.

Why are there no presidential candidates on the ballot?

Presidential candidates in Colorado are selected through a party caucus system. Democratic and Republican caucuses were held on March 1, 2016. Please contact your local party for more information about this process.

Why are both Boulder County Commissioner district seats on my ballot?

County Commissioners are elected at-large, though the candidates must reside in the district for which they are running.

How do I learn more about the candidate races?

Contact your local party for more information. Here are the links to the two major political parties: [Democratic Party](#) [Republican Party](#)

Voting & Registration

Why am I getting a ballot in the mail?

In Colorado, all active, eligible registered voters automatically receive a ballot in the mail. If you prefer to vote in person, you can do so at any Voter Service and Polling Center.

What do I do if I make a mistake, damage or lose my ballot?

Email Vote@BoulderCountyVotes.org or call 303-413-7740 to request a replacement ballot. You may also go to any Voter Service and Polling Center to pick up a replacement in person.

How do I know you received my ballot?

Use our [Ballot Track](#) tool to check the status of your mail ballot. You also can opt to receive text, email, or phone messages when your ballot is mailed to you and received by Boulder County for processing. You can sign up year round.

Can I leave some races blank?

Yes. You do not have to vote on every race unless you choose to do so. Some electors only cast a vote for one race, while others may vote for every race. Whatever races you do choose to vote on will be counted.

Can I vote for more than one option on my ballot?

You should only vote for one option in all issues or races, unless the ballot states "Vote for Two" (or more). We will not count your vote on one-vote races or issues where you have selected more than one option. The remainder of your ballot will be counted, except for the races with multiple votes.

I've heard that mail ballots are only counted if there are close races. Is that true?

No. All ballots are counted in the same manner. All valid ballots cast by mail are counted in every election in Colorado, regardless of the outcome or closeness of any race.

Are ADA accessible voting machines available?

Yes. ADA accessible voting machines are available for use at any Voter Service and Polling Center.

How do I return my mail ballot – what are my options and how much does it cost?

Voters can return their Primary ballot by mail (47-cent stamp or Forever stamp) or by dropping it off at any designated ballot drop-off site throughout Boulder County including any of our 24-hour ballot drop boxes.

Do I need to provide identification to vote and what are the acceptable forms of IDs?

Not all voters will need to provide an ID in order to vote. In Colorado, a voter must present identification if they are:

- Voting by mail for the first time if they did not provide an acceptable form of ID or Colorado driver's license number when they registered. These voters will receive specific instructions with their mail ballot telling them to include a photocopy of their ID when they return their ballot.
- Voting in person at a Voter Service and Polling Center.

For a list of acceptable forms of identification, please visit the Secretary of State's [voter identification page](#).

I just found out there is an election and I would like to vote. How do I do so?

- Assuming you meet eligibility and residency requirements, you may register to vote up to and including Election Day.
- To register to vote, go to GoVoteColorado.com or see our registration page for more details. You can also register to vote at any Voter Service and Polling Center.
- Register to vote online on or before Monday, June 20, 2016 in order to receive a mail ballot.

After June 20, a person can still register online, but will need to visit a Voter Service and Polling Center in order to request a ballot.

How do I find out what district I am in or who represents me in Congress or other local offices?

To find out this information, visit GoVoteColorado.com and look up your voter registration. Your district information is listed at the bottom of the search.