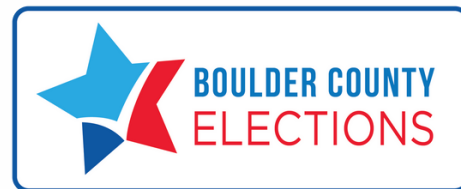# City of Boulder Mayoral Election
Ranked Choice Voting Overview

Beginning this fall for the November 2023 Coordinated Election, the City of Boulder will elect its mayor using ranked choice voting (also known as instant runoff voting).

Key Dates:

Oct 16 – Ballots mail
Oct 30 – Vote Centers open; Last day to be mailed a ballot; Last recommended date to return your ballot by mail (otherwise, use drop box)
Nov 7 – Election Day

What is Ranked Choice Voting?

Ranked choice voting is a voting method that allows voters to rank election contest candidates in order of preference when there are three or more candidates.
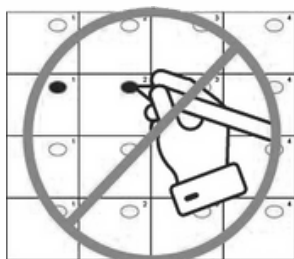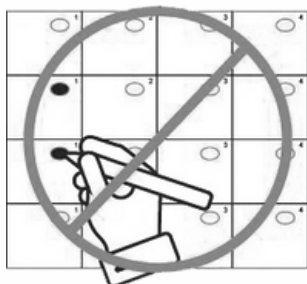
How to mark your ballot:

Rank candidates in the order of your preference by filling in the oval as follows:

	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	4th Choice
Candidate A	●	○	○	○
Candidate B	○	○	○	●
Candidate C	○	○	●	○
Candidate D	○	●	○	○

- In the first column, for your first choice.
- In the second column, for your second choice.
- In the third column, for your third choice.
- You can continue to rank candidates until you run out of allowable rankings, run out of candidates, or do not wish to vote for any remaining candidates.

Common Errors:

- Do not choose more than one candidate in the same column.
- Do not choose the same candidate more than once.
- Do not skip rankings. For example, do not fill in a 1st and 3rd choice without filling in a 2nd choice. Per Secretary of State guidelines, no rankings will be counted after a skipped column/ranking.

How are the votes counted?

All first-choice rankings are counted. If no candidate has more than 50% of the first-choice rankings, the candidate with the fewest first place votes is eliminated, and those ballots then have their 2nd choice counted. This elimination process continues until a candidate has more than 50% of the votes.

I really want my first-choice candidate to win. Should I rank the candidate as my first, second, third, etc. choice?

No. Ranking a candidate more than once does not benefit the candidate. If a voter ranks one candidate as the voter's first, second, third, etc. choice, it is the same as if the voter leaves the second, third, etc. choice blank. In other words, if the candidate is eliminated that candidate does not receive your 2nd, 3rd, etc. choice votes.

I like two candidates equally, can I give them the same ranking?

No. If a voter gives more than one candidate the same ranking, the vote cannot be counted. Only one candidate can represent the voter's first, second, third, etc. choice.

Are other cities or counties doing ranked choice voting?

Ranked choice voting has been successfully used for many years in jurisdictions outside of Colorado. The City of Boulder will be the first jurisdiction in Colorado to conduct ranked choice voting on a modern voting system. Previously, several other small jurisdictions have used ranked choice voting in Colorado with hand counted ballots.

More Frequently Asked Questions on Ranked Choice Voting found online at:
www.BoulderCountyVotes.gov

BOULDER COUNTY ELECTIONS

Boulder County