



FAQs: Michigan's February 27, 2024 Presidential Primary

Do I have to be a registered Republican or Democrat to participate in Michigan's Presidential Primary?

No. Michigan's Presidential Primary has been designated as a closed primary. There is no political party registration requirement in Michigan election law. Any Michigan registered voter can participate in the primary. By law, you must make your ballot selection in writing by completing the Application to Vote on Election Day; or on the Absent Voter Ballot Application/Ballot Selection Form if voting absentee.

Why do I have to select a party ballot?

Michigan election law (MCL 168.615c) guides the conduct of the Presidential Primary. The law requires that voters indicate in writing which political party ballot they wish to vote. This requirement only applies to presidential primary elections, and voters will not be required to select a political party ballot type at other types of elections.

What is the difference between an Open Primary and a Closed Primary?

Voters in an open primary are given a ballot with a column listing each qualified party's candidates. Voters then decide which party primary they wish to participate in by voting only in the column of their party choice while in the privacy of the voting station. Voting for candidates in more than a single party's column will void the entire partisan ballot. Voters in closed primaries must state the party primary they wish to participate in before being issued a ballot. The ballot given to voters only has candidates of the party that corresponds to the voter's choice.

Will Michigan's closed Presidential Primary procedures affect the August State Primary in any way?

No. The August Primary is an open primary. Voters will **not** be asked to select a party before voting in the August Primary. Voters will be issued ballots containing all political parties and their candidates, and will select one of the parties in the privacy of the voting station.



When I select a party ballot for the Presidential Primary, does that mean I have to vote in the same party primary in August?

No. The written selection made by a voter at the Presidential Primary has no bearing on how a person votes in the State Primary election.

Will my ballot selection be made public?

Yes. By law a public list must be made available that includes the Presidential Primary ballot type chosen by each voter in the Presidential Primary. This list must be made available within 71 days after the Presidential Primary election. This ballot selection information is subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act. The public list of voters' Presidential Primary ballot selections must be destroyed after the 22-month retention period expires.

To be clear, **only the political party ballot selection will be made public**; the candidate you vote for will not be made public. Closed primaries also have secret ballots so that the candidate you vote for is never disclosed.

Who is on the ballot?

Michigan election law includes detailed requirements related to which candidates are eligible and how names would be placed on Michigan's Presidential Primary ballot. By law, both Republican and Democratic Party candidates are listed, but on separate ballots. Voters will also have the option of voting "uncommitted" on either the Republican or Democratic ballot.

The law required the Secretary of State to issue a list of individuals "generally advocated by the national news media to be potential presidential candidates." In addition, Michigan's Republican and Democratic parties had the ability to add candidates and others not on those lists had the opportunity to file petitions to be placed on the ballot.

Candidates had until December 8, 2023 to formally withdraw their names from Michigan's ballot. Although some of the candidates have since suspended their campaigns nationally, state law required that the candidate listing be finalized in December 2023. Visit the Michigan Voter Information Center online at Michigan.gov/Vote for a sample ballot, which lists all candidates on the ballot.



I already voted and returned my absentee ballot; the candidate I voted for has since suspended their campaign. Can I change my vote?

You may request to spoil your ballot and receive a new one by February 16, 2024. Contact (or visit) your local clerk immediately if you are interested in doing so. Visit Michigan.gov/Vote to find contact and location information for your local clerk.

What does an "uncommitted" vote mean?

Each party ballot has a vote position for "uncommitted." When a voter selects "uncommitted", this indicates the voter is exercising a vote for that political party but is not committed to any of the candidates listed on the ballot. If enough voters cast "uncommitted" votes, the party may send delegates to the national nominating convention who are not committed to a specific candidate.

Will there be other races on the Presidential Primary ballot?

A number of local jurisdictions are holding special elections in conjunction with the Presidential Primary. Voters who do not wish to cast a vote in the Presidential Primary but want to vote in the local special election have the option of selecting a ballot containing only the local contests. To see if your community will have other races on the ballot, visit Michigan.gov/Vote.

When does early voting begin?

Each jurisdiction is required to hold at least nine days of early voting beginning on February 17, 2024 and ending February 25, 2024. Jurisdictions may choose to do more than the nine days required by the state Constitution. To find your early voting locations, dates, and times, visit Michigan.gov/Vote.