



Closed Party Primary Elections in Louisiana

Act 1 of the 2024 First Extraordinary Session

Act 640 of the 2024 Regular Session

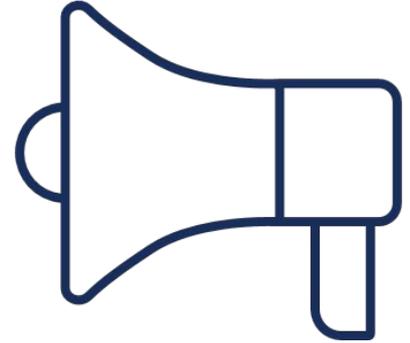
Act 386 of the 2025 Regular Session

Why the Change?

The Louisiana Legislature implemented Closed-Party Primaries through Act 1 of the 2024 First Extraordinary Session.

Act 1 outlines a process for Democrats, Republicans, and No Party voters to select a candidate to represent Louisiana's two major political parties for certain elected offices.

Unlike Louisiana's current open primary elections (sometimes called Jungle Primaries), in a closed-party primary election, the candidates on a voter's ballot will be limited to those of the voter's party affiliation.



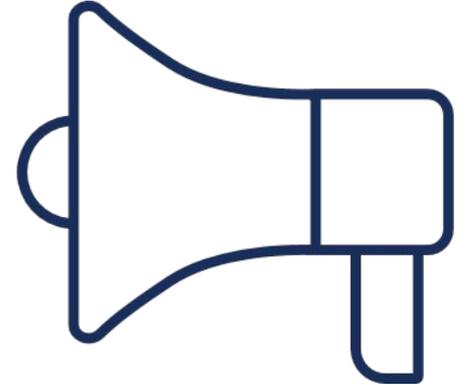
How This Changes Elections in Louisiana:

Beginning in 2026, closed party primaries will be held in the Spring of each election year. R.S. 18:2 defines “party primary offices” as the following:

- **US Senate**
- **US House of Representatives**
- **Louisiana Supreme Court**
- **Public Service Commission**
- **Board of Elementary and Secondary Education**

*This **does not** affect any other state and local races. All other races remain open to all voters regardless of party affiliation.*

NOTE: The Presidential Preference Primary (PPP) election held in the spring of each Presidential Election year remains the same, and is also a closed party election.



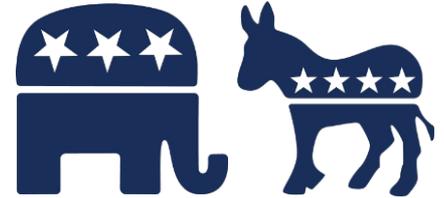
How Closed Party Primaries Work

Only *major political parties* may have closed party primary elections for a party primary office. At this time, the Democratic and Republican parties are the only two major political parties. (R.S. 18:410.1 et seq.)

Any time a closed party race is on the ballot, a *party primary* election for that office will be held in April, at the same time as open spring primary elections.

- Only Democratic candidates will run in the Democratic party primary election
- Only Republican candidates will run in the Republican party primary election

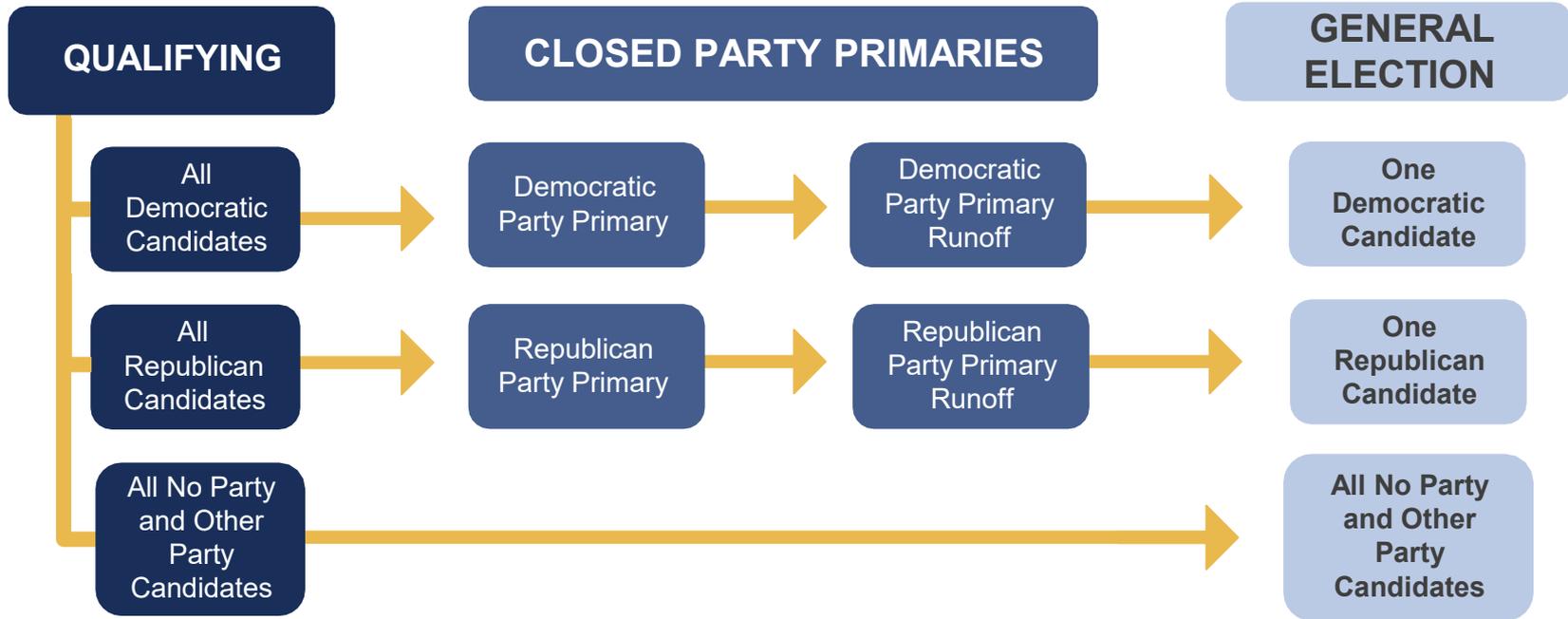
A *party primary run-off*, if necessary, will be held in May, at the same time as open spring general elections. (R.S. 18:410.7)



The winning Democrat and winning Republican will advance to the general election held in the fall.



Path to the General Election



Party Affiliation Defined

MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES: Democratic Party and Republican Party

OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES:

- Recognized political parties other than Democratic and Republican
 - Green Party and Libertarian Party
- All other parties in Louisiana
 - Reform Party, Pizza Party, Jedi Party, etc.
 - If the voter writes in a party name on their registration application, it's considered an "other" party



Voters can choose to affiliate with a major political party, with a recognized political party, or with any other party of their choice. Voters can also choose to register to vote without party affiliation. ***These unaffiliated voters are called No Party voters.***



Affiliation by the Numbers: A Non Exhaustive List

| | |
|-------------|-----------|
| Democratic | 1,090,365 |
| Republican | 1,046,625 |
| No Party | 805,464 |
| Libertarian | 14,936 |
| Green | 2,777 |
| Undecided | 100 |
| Jedi | 27 |
| Communist | 22 |

| | |
|--------------|----|
| Unaffiliated | 39 |
| Confederate | 16 |
| Whig | 12 |
| Marijuana | 12 |
| Jesus | 10 |
| Birthday | 8 |
| Aerosmith | 6 |
| Nunya | 5 |

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Cajun | 2 |
| Don't Screw Up | 2 |
| Grilled Cheese | 1 |
| Party of One | 1 |
| Pickle | 1 |

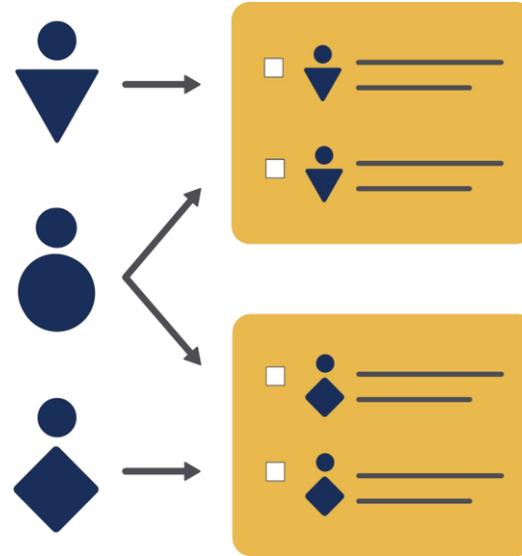


Why Party Affiliation Matters for CPP Elections

Voters who are registered as Democratic or Republican **can only participate in their party's primary.** (R.S. 18:410.3(A))

No Party voters (not affiliated with any party) **can choose to participate** in the Democratic or Republican party primaries, **but not both.** (R.S. 18:410.3(B))

If a voter is registered as affiliated with any other party, **they cannot participate in closed party primaries.** (R.S. 18:410.3)



No Party Voters Must Choose a Ballot

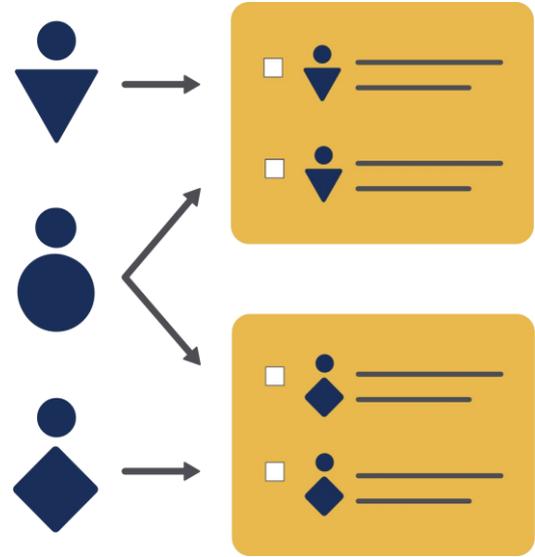
No Party voters (not affiliated with any party) *can choose to receive one* of the following ballots when a party primary election is held:

- Democratic Party ballot;
- Republican Party ballot; or
- No Party ballot (neither party primary race on the ballot, but contains all other races for which the voter is eligible)

No Party voters will have to *opt in* to participate in a party primary by selecting a party ballot *prior to voting*.

During early voting and on election day, all No Party voters will make their choice by completing a *Declaration of Ballot Choice* form prior to voting.

A No Party voter who participates in one party's closed primary election cannot participate in the other party's primary runoff.



No Party Voters Must Choose a Ballot

In-Person Voting

The **Declaration of Ballot Choice** form (see draft to the right) will be used by election officials to confirm which ballot to provide to the No Party voter.

- No Party voters will select one of the following on the form:
 - Democratic Party Ballot;
 - Republican Party Ballot; **or**
 - No Party (unaffiliated) Ballot

| DECLARATION OF BALLOT CHOICE For No Party (Unaffiliated) Voters in Closed Party Primary Elections | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>INSTRUCTIONS: Use this form to choose a ballot for this closed party primary (including a second party primary, if any). Voters who are not affiliated with any political party (registered as No Party) may choose to vote in either the Democratic or Republican closed party primary election or may choose to vote a No Party (Unaffiliated) ballot (R.S. 18:410.3). If you vote in a Democratic or Republican first party primary, your choice cannot be changed for the second party primary, if any.</p> <p>Your selection does not change your party affiliation in your voter registration record.</p> | | |
| SECTION 1: DECLARATION OF BALLOT CHOICE (SELECT ONE) TO BE COMPLETED BY VOTER | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DEMOCRATIC PARTY BALLOT I choose to receive a Democratic Party ballot for this closed party primary (including a second party primary, if any). I understand that this selection does not change the party affiliation on my voter registration record. | <input type="checkbox"/> REPUBLICAN PARTY BALLOT I choose to receive a Republican Party ballot for this closed party primary (including a second party primary, if any). I understand that this selection does not change the party affiliation on my voter registration record. | <input type="checkbox"/> NO PARTY (UNAFFILIATED) BALLOT I choose not to receive a closed party primary ballot for this election. I will receive a ballot for all other candidate or proposition races for which I am eligible. |
| SECTION 2: VOTER NAME AND SIGNATURE TO BE COMPLETED BY VOTER | | |
| _____ (Print Name) (Date) | | |
| _____ (Signature) | | |
| If your signature is a mark, a witness to your mark is required to sign: | | |
| _____ (Witness Signature) (Date) | | |
| <small>Whenever a document required by or provided for in the Louisiana Election Code is required to be witnessed, the witness shall be at least 18 years of age (R.S. 18:46A).</small> | | |
| SECTION 3: ELECTION INFORMATION TO BE COMPLETED BY COMMISSIONER | | |
| <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> (Button Lockout #) | _____ (Commissioner Initials) | _____ (Registration #) |
| | | _____ (Voting Precinct) |



Louisiana Secretary of State
Nancy Landry

No Party Voters Must Choose a Ballot

Absentee Voting

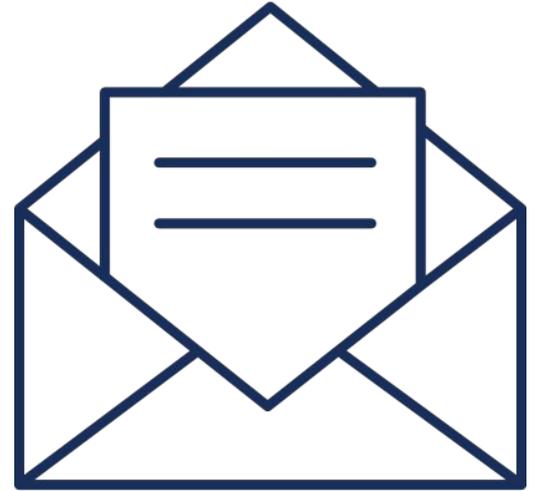
No Party voters currently enrolled in an absentee program (Military and Overseas, Over 65, Voters with Disabilities)

- These voters will receive and complete a one-time **Declaration of Ballot Choice** form that will determine which CPP ballot they will receive. **The declaration will remain in effect until the voter submits a new absentee ballot application form.**

No Party voters who submit a new absentee ballot application form will declare their ballot choice in their application to receive an absentee ballot.

The declaration will remain in effect until the voter submits a new absentee ballot application form or Declaration of Ballot Choice form.

NOTE: Ballot selections do not change party affiliation in the voter's registration record.



Closed Party Primary Ballots

What this means for registered *Democrats:*

- Democrats will receive a ballot with Democratic party primaries on it, along with all other state and local candidate and proposition races for which they are eligible.

What this means for voters registered with *any other party:*

- Voters affiliated with any other party cannot vote in a closed party primary, but will receive a ballot for all other state and local candidate and proposition races for which they are eligible.

What this means for registered *Republicans:*

- Republicans will receive a ballot with Republican party primaries on it, along with all other state and local candidate and proposition races for which they are eligible.

What this means for registered *No Party voters:*

- No Party voters can choose which party primary they participate in by selecting a ballot prior to voting. If a No Party voter selects a party ballot for the party primary, they will receive the same party's ballot in the party primary runoff (if needed). Their ballot will also contain all other state and local candidate and proposition races for which they are eligible.



Upcoming Closed Party Primary Elections:

2026 Elections

Closed Party races will be *US Senator, US Representative, and Public Service Commission (PSC)*.

- Qualifying dates are February 11-13, 2026
 - Nominating petitions may begin September 16, 2025
 - All signatures must be submitted to ROV by January 14, 2026
- Party Primary election is May 16, 2026
- Party Primary runoff election, if necessary, is June 27, 2026
- General election is November 3, 2026

Note: All other offices on the ballot will be open primary races.



Recent Elections Legislation

Act 84 (HB 420 Rep. Billings)

- Dissolves the Independent Party effective August 1, 2025.
- After that date, any voters who were previously registered as “Independent” or who attempt to register as “Independent” in the future will automatically be registered as “No Party.”
- Prohibits future statewide recognition of a political party which declares its name solely to be “Independent” or “Independent Party.”



2026 ELECTIONS

(DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE BY THE LEGISLATURE)

| Date of Election | February 7 | March 14 | April 18 | May 16 | June 27 | November 3 | December 12 |
|--|--|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|--------------|
| Type of Election | Special Legislative Primary [^] | Special Legislative General/ [/] Special Primary (69 th State Representative District Only)* | Special General (69 th State Representative District Only) | Party Primary/ Municipal Primary | 2 nd Party Primary/ Municipal General | Congressional General/ Open Primary | Open General |
| 1 st Day to Obtain Signature for Nominating Petitions+ | n/a | n/a | n/a | 9/16/2025 | n/a | 3/31/2026 | n/a |
| Deadline: Submit Nominating Petitions to Registrar of Voters+ | 12/5/2025 | 1/16/2026* | n/a | 1/14/2026 | n/a | 7/1/2026 | n/a |
| Deadline: Specials | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1/14/2026 | n/a | 7/1/2026 | n/a |
| Deadline: Propositions | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1/14/2026 | 4/27/2026 | 7/1/2026 | 10/12/2026 |
| Qualifying Dates | 12/17/2025 - 12/19/2025 | 1/28/2026 – 1/30/2026* | n/a | 2/11/2026 – 2/13/2026 | n/a | 7/29/2026 - 7/31/2026 | n/a |
| In Person/By Mail Registration Deadline | 1/7/2026 | 2/11/2026 | 3/18/2026 | 4/15/2026 | 5/27/2026 | 10/5/2026 | 11/12/2026 |
| Geaux Vote Online Registration Deadline | 1/17/2026 | 2/21/2026 | 3/28/2026 | 4/25/2026 | 6/6/2026 | 10/13/2026 | 11/21/2026 |
| Deadline to Request a Mail Ballot from Registrar (other than Military and Overseas) | 2/3/2026 | 3/10/2026 | 4/14/2026 | 5/12/2026 | 6/23/2026 | 10/30/2026 | 12/8/2026 |
| Deadline for Registrar to Receive Voted Mail Ballot (other than Military and Overseas) | 2/6/2026 | 3/13/2026 | 4/17/2026 | 5/15/2026 | 6/26/2026 | 11/2/2026 | 12/11/2026 |
| Early Voting Begins | 1/24/2026 | 2/28/2026 | 4/4/2026 | 5/2/2026 | 6/13/2026** | 10/20/2026 | 11/28/2026 |
| Early Voting Ends | 1/31/2026 | 3/7/2026 | 4/11/2026 | 5/9/2026 | 6/20/2026 | 10/27/2026 | 12/5/2026 |

IMPORTANT NOTES

Dates for the 2026 calendar year have been adjusted per Act 640 of the 2024 Regular Legislative Session. Spring election dates have been adjusted per Act 1 of the 2025 First Extraordinary Legislative Session.

[^]The Special Legislative Primary and General is for the 37th (Parishes of Calcasieu and Jefferson Davis), 60th (Parishes of Assumption and Iberville), 97th (Parish of Orleans), and 100th (Parish of Orleans) State Representative Districts and the 3rd (Parishes of Orleans and St. Bernard) State Senatorial District.

*Dates apply only to the 69th (Parish of East Baton Rouge) State Representative District.

**Date subject to change if the Governor proclaims a state observed holiday for Juneteenth.

+ Beginning in 2026, all candidates for closed party primary offices who are not affiliated with the Democratic or Republican parties must qualify via nominating petition by the deadline for the Party Primary Election. (Act 1 of the 2024 First Extraordinary Legislative Session and Act 640 of the 2024 Regular Legislative Session)



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