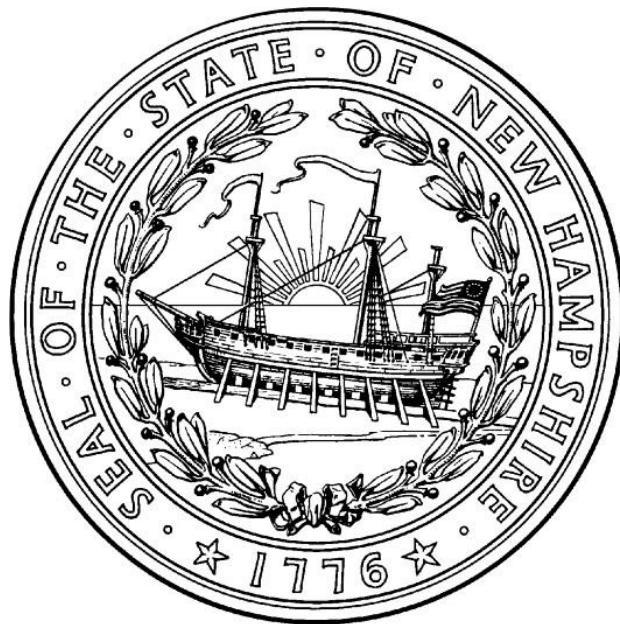


# **2024 State Primary Election**

**Tuesday, September 10, 2024**



## **Media Guide**

**New Hampshire Secretary of State**

## Useful Links & Contacts

**Communications Director, Secretary of State:** Anna Sventek | (603) 731-2286 | [Anna.Sventek@sos.nh.gov](mailto:Anna.Sventek@sos.nh.gov)

**Secretary of State's website:** [www.sos.nh.gov](http://www.sos.nh.gov)

**Election Procedure Manual:** [www.sos.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt561/files/documents/2024-08/epm-2024-2025-final-ada-for-web.pdf](http://www.sos.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt561/files/documents/2024-08/epm-2024-2025-final-ada-for-web.pdf)

**Sample Ballots:** [www.sos.nh.gov/elections/sample-ballots](http://www.sos.nh.gov/elections/sample-ballots)

**Cumulative list of candidates (broken down by party):**

Democratic: [www.sos.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt561/files/documents/2024-07/cumulative-filings-democratic-7.23.24.pdf](http://www.sos.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt561/files/documents/2024-07/cumulative-filings-democratic-7.23.24.pdf)

Republican: <https://www.sos.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt561/files/documents/2024-09/cumulative-filings-republican-9.3.24.pdf>

**Party Registration History:** [www.sos.nh.gov/party-registration-history-1970-2024](http://www.sos.nh.gov/party-registration-history-1970-2024)

**Election Results (will be posted here):** [www.sos.nh.gov/2024-election-results](http://www.sos.nh.gov/2024-election-results)

**Secretary of State's social media:**

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/SOS.NH.Gov](http://www.facebook.com/SOS.NH.Gov)

X (Twitter): [x.com/NHSecretary](https://x.com/NHSecretary); @NHSecretary

Instagram: [www.instagram.com/nhsecretary](http://www.instagram.com/nhsecretary); @nhsecretary

**Secretary of State videos:** [www.sos.nh.gov/educational-videos](http://www.sos.nh.gov/educational-videos)

**Campaign Finance Reports:** [cfs.sos.nh.gov/login](http://cfs.sos.nh.gov/login)

**Voter Information Lookup** (voter registration info, polling locations & hours, statewide list of town/city clerks, absentee ballot tracking): [app.sos.nh.gov/viphome](http://app.sos.nh.gov/viphome)

**Archived General Manuals of the Court - Red Books** (contain past election results, voter registration numbers and other historical election data):

[archive.org/search?query=new+hampshire>manual+for+the+general+court&sort=-date](http://archive.org/search?query=new+hampshire>manual+for+the+general+court&sort=-date) (up to 2015 – published biennially in the odd-numbered year)

**Attorney General**

Election Unit: [www.doj.nh.gov/bureaus/election-law-unit](http://www.doj.nh.gov/bureaus/election-law-unit)

Attorney General Election Hotline: 866-868-3703

## Stats at a Glance

**Polling Locations** – New Hampshire has a total of 308 polling locations and over 320 voting jurisdictions. A full list of polling locations and hours can be found on the Secretary of State’s Voter Information Lookup:

[app.sos.nh.gov/viphome](http://app.sos.nh.gov/viphome)

**Towns/cities that use AccuVote ballot counting device: 110 (+67 wards)**

[www.sos.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt561/files/inline-documents/sonh/towns-and-cities-using-accuvote-machines-2024\\_0.pdf](http://www.sos.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt561/files/inline-documents/sonh/towns-and-cities-using-accuvote-machines-2024_0.pdf)

**Towns/cities that use VotingWorks ballot counting device: 15 (+6 wards)**

[www.sos.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt561/files/inline-documents/sonh/towns-and-cities-using-votingworks-machines-2024\\_4.pdf](http://www.sos.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt561/files/inline-documents/sonh/towns-and-cities-using-votingworks-machines-2024_4.pdf)

**Towns/cities that hand count ballots: 122**

[www.sos.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt561/files/inline-documents/sonh/towns-and-cities-which-hand-count-ballots-2024\\_1.pdf](http://www.sos.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt561/files/inline-documents/sonh/towns-and-cities-which-hand-count-ballots-2024_1.pdf)

All votes are cast on paper ballots in New Hampshire. None of the ballot counting devices used in the election can connect to the internet.

## Election Officials – Roles

**Moderator** – the chief election official in the polling place. A moderator’s responsibilities include reconciling and announcing the election results at the polling place. Moderators also complete and submit the Return of Votes form, which is delivered to the Secretary of State’s Office through law enforcement. Any member of the media wishing to report from the polling place should touch base with the moderator first.

**City/Town Clerk** – a locally elected official that is responsible, among other duties, for accepting voter registration applications and taking custody of ballots after they are counted on election night. Clerks also assist moderators in completing and submitting the Return of Votes form, which is delivered to the Secretary of State’s Office through law enforcement.

**Supervisor of the Checklist** – responsible for registering voters and correcting the voter checklist. Supervisors of the checklist hold a mandatory meeting six to 13 days before the State Primary to update the voter checklist. They must be in session at the polls on election day to accept election-day registrations.

**Inspector of Election** – individual appointed by the Democratic and Republican parties pursuant to [RSA 658:2](#). The moderator will generally appoint one inspector of election from each party to serve as a ballot clerk at each check-in station.

**Ballot Clerk** – verifies any individual seeking to vote is listed on the checklist and has not already voted at the election. Afterwards, they hand the voter their ballot. If the individual is not registered yet, they are sent to the supervisors of the checklist in the polling place. An inspector of the election (designated by the state party chairs) from each political party is appointed by the moderator to serve as a ballot clerk.

**Poll worker** – typically a volunteer who helps at the polling place (as a greeter, for example). An individual must be at least 17 years old and domiciled in the community they are volunteering in as a poll worker.

## Voter Registration

### Qualifications

An individual who is a United States citizen, at least 18 years old on election day, and domiciled in New Hampshire can register to vote in the town or city ward where they are domiciled in New Hampshire. There is no minimum residency requirement in New Hampshire; qualified individuals can register to vote as soon as that town or ward becomes their domicile.

### How to register

Qualified individuals can apply to register to vote at their local clerk's office or at any session of the supervisors of the checklist, including at a mandatory meeting six to 13 days before the election, depending on when the local supervisors of the checklist have scheduled it to update the voter checklist. Those who apply with the clerk are not registered until and unless the supervisors of the checklist vote during a properly noticed session to add them to the checklist.

New Hampshire also offers election-day registration at the polls.

Individuals can also register by mail using the absentee process if they cannot apply in person due to temporary absence or a disability.

To register, individuals need to fill out a Voter Registration form and provide proof of citizenship, age, primary residence address (domicile) and identity. If they do not have the necessary proof, they can sign an affidavit form provided by their local election official.

A full list of acceptable forms of ID can be found here: [www.sos.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt561/files/inline-documents/sonh/registering-to-vote-in-new-hampshire-november-2023.pdf](http://www.sos.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt561/files/inline-documents/sonh/registering-to-vote-in-new-hampshire-november-2023.pdf)

### Party Affiliation Deadline

The deadline to change party affiliation before the 2024 State Primary was **June 4, 2024**. After the deadline, voters are locked into their party affiliation and can only vote with that party's ballot at the State Primary election.

### Undeclared Voters

Undeclared voters can vote in the State Primary. When they check in with the ballot clerk at the State Primary, they must choose a Democratic or Republican ballot. Once they choose that ballot, they become a registered member of that party. After the voter casts their ballot, they can switch back to Undeclared before leaving the polling place.

## Candidates

### Officially recognized parties

The only two parties that are officially recognized by the state currently are the Democratic and Republican parties. ([RSA 652:11](#))

### Write-in Votes

If a person wins the most votes for a primary for an office as a write-in, they must receive at least 35 write-in votes, or write-in votes equaling at least 10 percent of the total votes cast for that party (whichever is smaller) to accept that party's nomination.

If that individual was a candidate for the other party's primary (ex: a Democratic candidate who has the most votes, by write-in, on the Republican ballot) they had to have won the nomination of their own party to be able to accept the opposite party's nomination.

If the winner by write-in was not listed anywhere on either political party ballot, they must file a declaration of candidacy with the Secretary of State no later than the first Monday after the primary if they wish to accept the nomination. ([RSA 659:88](#))

### Political Advertising

All political advertising must have the name and address of the person/political committee responsible for it. ([RSA 664:14](#)).

### Order of Names on Ballot

The order of names on state election ballots was determined by random drawing pursuant to RSA 656:5-a. The order of names guide can be found here: [www.sos.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt561/files/documents/2024-06/2024-2026%20Order%20of%20Names%20on%20Ballots%20pursuant%20to%20RSA%20656\\_0.pdf](http://www.sos.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt561/files/documents/2024-06/2024-2026%20Order%20of%20Names%20on%20Ballots%20pursuant%20to%20RSA%20656_0.pdf)

### No-Electioneering Corridor

The moderator is responsible for establishing one or more "no-electioneering corridors" outside of the polling place that allow voters to enter and exit the polling place without interruption or interference. The corridors must be at least 10 feet wide and extend from all entrances of the polling place a reasonable distance along the sidewalks or parking lots at the polling place.

Candidates and supporters are permitted to stand outside of the corridor with political signs. Candidates may enter a polling place provided they do not electioneer, linger, or disrupt voters or local election officials in any way.

### Disqualification of Primary Candidate

When a candidate no longer qualifies for office following the Primary Election due to domicile (they move), or incapacitating physical or mental disability, the Secretary of State may remove the candidate's name from the ballot. That candidate's party may name a new candidate within three days of the notice of a vacancy. ([RSA 655:38](#))

## Absentee Voting

### Who qualifies to register and vote absentee?

In New Hampshire, you can vote by absentee ballot if you will be out of town on election day; you have a religious observance that prevents you from voting in person; you have a physical disability or illness that prevents you from voting in person; you have an employment commitment or must care for an adult or child during the entire time polls are open; you are confined in a penal institution for a conviction of a misdemeanor or while awaiting trial; you are a member of the Attorney General's Address Confidentiality Program or are protected by a Domestic Violence Protective Order; or the National Weather Service has issued a winter storm, blizzard, or ice storm warning for your town/ ward for election day, and you have concerns about safely traveling in the storm.

### Absentee ballot deadlines

Mailed-in absentee ballots must be received by the clerk's office by 5pm on election day. If a voter requests that a clerk send them an absentee ballot by mail, the clerk must receive that request by 12:00pm on the day before the election ([RSA 657:15](#)). The deadline to request and return an absentee ballot in person is 5pm the day before the election.

The clerk's office is required to be open from 3-5pm at minimum the day before the election to provide an in-person applicant an absentee ballot that they can complete along with the associated affidavit and return it in a sealed envelope to the clerk, all at the office.

### Proof of ID – Absentee

Individuals registering to vote absentee by mail must enclose proof of identity with their Voter Registration Form and signed affidavit forms.

Registered voters voting absentee may voluntarily prove their identity if they return their ballot to the clerk in person. Absentee voters who are already registered do not need to provide proof of ID with their ballot.

## Election Day

### Media Access

Members of the media wishing to report from a polling place should contact the local moderator/clerk ahead of time: [app.sos.nh.gov/viphome](http://app.sos.nh.gov/viphome).

The media and the public are entitled to be present outside the guardrail at the polling place from the moment it opens to permit voters in until after in-person voting has stopped, all ballots have been counted, the results have been announced, and the counted ballots and absentee materials have been sealed in storage boxes.

The media generally are not allowed inside the guard rail.

*RSA 659:21. Admittance Within Guardrail. – No person other than representatives of the secretary of state, representatives of the attorney general, the election officers, the voters admitted or those*

*admitted to aid a voter pursuant to RSA 659:20 shall be permitted within the guardrail except by the authority of the election officers and, then, only for the purpose of keeping order and enforcing the law.*

*RSA 659:45-a Certain Photography Prohibited. – No person shall take or cause any photograph to be taken within the guardrail that captures another voter or another voter's ballot.*

Voters have a right to a secret ballot. Even when taking photos/video from outside the guardrail, please respect that right to a secret ballot by not taking images that show both a voter and how that voter's ballot is marked. If such an image is inadvertently captured, delete it or at the least do not publish or disclose it.

### **ID Requirements – Election Day**

To obtain a ballot from the ballot clerk at the polls, registered voters need to show a valid form of ID. If they do not have a valid ID with them and a local election official at the polls cannot vouch for their identity, they need to fill out an affidavit form.

An individual registering for the first time in New Hampshire at the polls on election day who does not show a form of ID and whose identity cannot be verified by a local election official must complete an affidavit ballot. The ballot will be cast and counted and included in the vote total.

The individual who cast the affidavit ballot must mail proof of identification to the Secretary of State's Office, which must be received by the Secretary of State within seven days of the election. If proof is not received by that deadline, the votes on that voter's ballot will be subtracted from the vote total.

### **Polling Hours**

Polling locations in New Hampshire are open from 11am – 7pm at minimum. Most locations open between 6-8 am; all polling locations close by 8pm. Polling hours are listed by location here:

[app.sos.nh.gov/statelistclerkandpolling](http://app.sos.nh.gov/statelistclerkandpolling)

***659:4 Hours of Polling in Municipalities.** – At all state elections in towns and cities the polls shall open not later than 11 o'clock in the morning and shall close not earlier than 7 o'clock in the evening. In cities, the city council shall determine the polling hours no later than 30 days prior to a state election.*

For towns that sometimes elect to hold midnight voting (Dixville, Hart's Location, Millsfield), polls cannot close until every resident has been given the opportunity to vote ([RSA 659:3-a](#)).

### **Accessible Voting**

Every polling place must be accessible to voters with disabilities. Every polling place must also be equipped with the one4all accessible voting system. More information on the one4all system can be found here:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=zHdB81xrQ74](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zHdB81xrQ74)

Voters with print disabilities may vote using an accessible absentee ballot which allows them to mark their ballot independently on their computer, print out their completed ballot, and return it to their local clerk by the regular absentee deadlines.

## **Processing Absentee Ballots**

Election officials can start processing absentee ballots at the polling place on election day at 1:00pm, unless a different time no earlier than two hours after the polls open has been chosen and properly posted at least 24 hours in advance. When processing absentee ballots, election officials will take the ballots and affidavits out of the envelopes and check the voter's name against the voter checklist to ensure they are registered and have not already voted in person. Those ballots are then removed from the envelope and cast into the ballot counting device or ballot box and counted along with the rest of the ballots after the polls close to voting on election day. ([RSA 659:49](#))

## **Closing the Polls**

Any qualified individual in line at their polling place at the time polls close must be given the opportunity to register to vote and vote. No other individuals will be able to join that line once the moderator of the polling place announces it has been closed.

## **Tallying Results**

The results tallying process takes place in the polls immediately after they close and is a continuous process. Once the results have been tallied and reconciled, the moderator will publicly announce the results and post them in the polling place.

Any member of the public can observe this process. Some cities and towns post those results on their website, but they are not required to.

## **Overvote**

An overvote is when a voter votes for more candidates than acceptable for a particular office. For example, if the ballot says, "Vote for up to 3; Three will be elected" and a voter votes for four or more candidates for that office, that is an overvote and their vote for that race will not be counted.

Local election officials are required to report the total number of overvotes for each office on the Return of Votes, which is returned to the Secretary of State's Office through law enforcement.

## **Undervote**

An undervote is when a voter votes for fewer candidates than permissible for a particular race. For example, if the ballot says, "Vote for up to 3; Three will be elected" and a voter votes for two or fewer candidates for that race, that is an undervote(s). Their vote will count for the candidates they did vote for in this instance.

Local election officials are required to report the total number of undervotes for each office on the Return of Votes, which is returned to the Secretary of State's Office through law enforcement.

## **Post-Election**

### **Results Reporting**

After the moderator publicly announces the results at the polling place, the Return of Votes will be delivered to the Secretary of State's Office by state police early the next day. In addition, within 48 hours after the closing of



the polls, each polling place must send the Secretary of State's Office a post-election certificate, which includes information on the number of voters marked as having voted on the checklist, the number of spoiled (cancelled) and uncast ballots etc.

There is no formal deadline for the certification of election results by the Secretary of State. However, the office aims to complete the process before the deadline to request a recount (Friday after the election at 5pm).

Final results will be posted here: [www.sos.nh.gov/2024-election-details](http://www.sos.nh.gov/2024-election-details)

### **Audits**

The Secretary of State's Office conducts random, post-election audits on ballot counting devices used in the State Primary. Following the passage of SB 489, the Secretary of State's Office must conduct post-election audits on no fewer than eight electronic ballot counting devices used at the State Primary. The locations are chosen at random and will not be announced until after all polls have opened on election day.

The Secretary of State's Office will send out a press release on election day announcing which locations were chosen. The results of the audits will be announced no later than 12pm on the Friday after the election (RSA 660:32-34).

### **Recounts**

A candidate can request a recount after a state primary if the difference between the number of votes cast for them and the winning candidate is less than 10 votes or less than 1.5 percent of the total ballots. ([RSA 660:7](#))

The applying candidate pays (fees are based on the percentage difference between the votes and the office the candidate is running for). If the applying candidate is declared the elected candidate after the recount, they are refunded the cost of the recount by the Secretary of State within 10 business days.

Recount procedures will be posted on the Secretary of State's website at [www.sos.nh.gov/2024-election-details](http://www.sos.nh.gov/2024-election-details). Recounts are held at the New Hampshire State Archives unless a larger location is required. Any member of the media and public can observe recounts.

Any media interested in attending recounts should contact Anna Sventek, Communications Director, for a schedule of recounts.

### **Tie Votes**

If there is a tie vote following the election, the Secretary of State will break the tie and determine the nomination by lot. After the tie is broken, the losing candidate can request a recount by the Friday after the State Primary ([RSA 660:23](#))

### **Vacancies**

For any vacancies that remain for any office following the State Primary, the appropriate state political party must notify the Secretary of State's Office in writing of the person they designate to fill that vacancy. The designated individual must file a Declaration of Candidacy form, and, if they are running for governor,

executive council, or state senator, the appropriate affidavit with the Secretary of State by the first Tuesday following the State Primary ([RSA 655:37](#)). The designated individual will be listed on the General Election ballot.