

2026 Primary Election Timeline

January

January 16 - February 14

Nomination of County Board of Election Members

(30 day period before February 15)

N.J.S.A. 19:6-18

**Under current law, the Democratic and Republican parties are the only "recognized political parties in New Jersey."*

February

February 15

Submission of Evening Voter Registration Plan by County Commissioners of Registration to Secretary of State

N.J.S.A. 19:31-2

***In counties where there is a Superintendent of Elections, that office serves as the commissioner of registration; in all other counties it's the County Board of Election.*

March

March 1

Governor Commissions County Election Board Members

N.J.S.A. 19:6-18

March 1 - March 15

County Boards of Election to Organize

N.J.S.A. 19:6-22; N.J.S.A. 19:6-23

March 12

Deadline for Creating, Abolishing, Dividing or Consolidating an Election District by County Board of Election

(82 days before primary election) (No election districts shall, except with the prior approval of the Secretary of State, be created, abolished, divided or consolidated between January 1 of any year whose last digit is 7 and December 1 of any year whose last digit is 0.)

N.J.S.A. 19:4-15, N.J.S.A. 19:4-15b.

March 20

Secretary of State to Submit Notice to County Clerks and County Boards of Election of Available Offices and Public Questions for Upcoming General Election

(74 days before primary election)

N.J.S.A. 19:12-1

March 22 –March 28; March 29 – April 4

Publication of Notice of Requirements to Vote in Primary Election by County Commissioner of Registration

(notice to be published once during each of the two calendar weeks next preceding the week of the 55th day before the election)

N.J.S.A. 19:23-45.1

2026 Primary Election Timeline

March 23

Notice of County Offices to be Elected at General Election to be sent by County Clerks to Municipal Clerks

(71 days before the primary election)

N.J.S.A. 19:12-5

March 23

Notice of Municipal Offices to be Elected at General Election to be sent by Municipal Clerks to County Clerks

(71 days before the primary election)

N.J.S.A. 19:12-6

March 23 – 4 p.m.

Nomination Petition Filing Deadline for Primary Election

(before 4:00 p.m. on or before 71st day prior to election)

N.J.S.A. 19:23-14

March 26 – 4 p.m.

Deadline for Amendments to Defective Petitions for Primary Election Candidates

(before 4 p.m. no later than 3 days after filing deadline)

N.J.S.A. 19:23-20

March 27 – 4 p.m.

Filing Deadline for Objections to Nominating Petitions for Primary Election Candidates

(before 4 p.m. no later than 4 days after filing deadline)

N.J.S.A. 19:23-20.1

March 30

Notice of Federal and State Offices to be Elected at General Election to be sent by County Clerks to Municipal Clerks

(64 days before the primary election)

N.J.S.A. 19:12-3

April

April 1

County Committee Chairs to File with Municipal Clerks the Number of County Committee Seats to be Filled at Primary Election

(April 1 in a year in which county committee members are to be elected)

N.J.S.A. 19:5-3

April 1

Appointment of District Board Workers by County Boards of Election

N.J.S.A. 19:6-3

April 1

Municipal Clerks to Submit Certified List of Suggested Polling Places to County Boards of Election

N.J.S.A. 19:8-2

2026 Primary Election Timeline

April 1

Deadline for Determination of Petition Challenges for Primary Election Candidates

(9 days after the last day for filing nomination petitions)

N.J.S.A. 19:13-11

April 1

Deadline for Filing Certificate to Fill Vacancy of a Primary Election Candidate By the Appointed Vacancy Committee

(62 days before election)

N.J.S.A. 19:23-12

April 2– 12 p.m.

Deadline for Municipal Clerk to Certify to the County Clerk the Names of the Candidates who filed Primary Election Nomination Petition with Municipal Clerk

(No later than 12 p.m. 61 days before election)

N.J.S.A. 19:23-14

April 2 – 12 p.m.

Transmittal of Secretary of State Certification of Federal and State Primary Election Candidates to County Clerks

(No later than 12 p.m. 61 days before election)

N.J.S.A. 19:23-21

April 2– 3 p.m.

County & Municipal Clerk Drawings for Ballot Positions for Primary Election Candidates

(At 3 p.m. on the 61st day before the election)

N.J.S.A. 19:23-24

April 3

Transmittal of County Clerk Certification of All Candidates to be Placed on the Primary Election Ballot to Municipal Clerks, the County Clerk Shall also Transmit such List, but for Federal Candidates; to Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC)

(60 days before the election)

N.J.S.A. 19:23-22

April 3*

Deadline for Preparation of Official Primary Election Ballot for Printing

(60 days before election)

N.J.S.A. 19:14-1

April 4

Deadline for Filing in Superior Court to Protect Primary Election Candidate's Rights

(12 days after petition filing deadline)

N.J.S.A. 19:13-12

April 7

Publication of Notice of Mail-in Ballot Availability for Primary Election by County Clerks

(prior to the 55th day before election)

N.J.S.A. 19:63-6

** County Commissioner of Registration is to provide notice to the two County Chairpersons of the date to inspect voting machines after they have been prepared for the upcoming election. This date will vary from county to county. N.J.S.A. 19:48-6*

2026 Primary Election Timeline

April 8

Deadline for Change of Party Affiliation Declaration Forms for Primary Election to be Filed with County Commissioners of Registration

(55 days before election)

N.J.S.A. 19:23-45

April 12 - May 11

Publication of Notice of Primary Election by County Boards of Election

(within 30 days before close of registration for election)

N.J.S.A. 19:12-7

**Under current law the Primary Election is held only for the Democratic and Republican parties. N.J.S.A. 19:5-1*

April 18

Commencement of Mailing of Mail-In Ballots for Primary Election

(45 days before election)

N.J.S.A. 19:63-5, N.J.S.A. 19:63-9

May

May 12

Voter Registration Deadline for Primary Election

(21 days before election)

N.J.S.A. 19:31-6

May 12

Mandated Evening Voter Registration Available for Primary Election in Offices of County Commissioners of Registration

(optional for Municipal Clerk)

(21 days before election)

N.J.S.A. 19:31-2

May 12

Deadline for Filing of Challenger Appointments for Primary Election

(Third Tuesday preceding election)

N.J.S.A. 19:7-3

May 14

Certification of Polling Places by County Boards of Election

N.J.S.A. 19:8-4

May 15

Filing of Certification of Accessible Polling Places to the Secretary of State by the County Boards of Election

N.J.S.A. 19:8-3.4

May 20

Mailing of Sample Ballots for Primary Election

(on or before 12 noon on Wednesday preceding the start of the early voting period for the primary election)

N.J.S.A. 19:23-34

2026 Primary Election Timeline

May 26 – May 31

Early Voting Period

(start on the 7th calendar day before a non-presidential primary election and end on the second calendar day before that primary election)

N.J.S.A. 19:15A-1

May 24 – May 30

Publication of Notice of Primary Election by County Boards of Election

(once during the calendar week prior to election)

N.J.S.A. 19:12-7

May 26

Publication of Challenge and Complaint Procedures for Primary Election by County Boards of Election

(7 days before election)

N.J.S.A. 19:12-9

May 26

Deadline to apply for a Mail-In Ballot by Mail for Primary Election

(not less than 7 days prior to election)

N.J.S.A. 19:63-3

May 28

Last day for Testing of Electronic Scanning Equipment for Tabulation of Paper Ballots for Primary Election

(A county board of elections may begin opening the inner envelopes for each mail-in ballot and canvassing each mail-in ballot from the inner envelope no earlier than five days prior to the day of the election-June 2)

(notice to be given 48 hours prior to the start of testing)

N.J.S.A. 19:53A-8; 19:63-22 (b)

May 29

Deadline for Application to Receive Primary Election Mail-In Ballots by Electronic Means for Qualified Overseas Civilian and Military Voters

(4th day before election)

N.J.S.A. 19:59-4

June

June 1 – by 3:00 p.m.

Deadline for In-Person Mail-In Ballot Applications for Primary Election

(up to 3:00 p.m. on the day before election)

N.J.S.A. 19:63-3

June 1

Publication of Challenge and Complaint Procedures for Primary Election by County Boards of Election

(1 day before election)

N.J.S.A. 19:12-9

2026 Primary Election Timeline

June 2

Primary Election Day

(Tuesday after first Monday in June)

N.J.S.A. 19:2-1, N.J.S.A. 19:23-40

June 2

Deadline for Post Office Receipt of Mail-In Ballots from the Primary Election

June 2

Deadline for In-Person Submission of Primary Election Mail-In Ballots to County Boards of Election and to Authorized Ballot Drop Boxes

(by 8:00 p.m. on the day of election)

N.J.S.A. 19:63-16; NJSA 19:63-16.1e

June 4

Deadline for Receipt by County Boards of Elections of Mail-In Ballots by delivery of the United States Postal Service that DO NOT Bear a Postmark of Delivery

(no later than 48 hours (2 days) after the time of the closing of the polls for the election)

N.J.S.A. 19:63-22

June 5

Deadline for Municipal Clerk to Canvass Statements of the District Board for Members of the County Committee of Any Political Party

(not later than 3 days after the results of the election for members of the county committees are received)

N.J.S.A. 19:23-54

June 8

Deadline for Receipt of Timely Mailed Postmarked Mail-In Ballots to County Boards of Election

(no later than 144 hours (6 days) after the time of the closing of the polls for the election)

N.J.S.A. 19:63-22

June 9

Deadline for Filing of Acceptance of One Nomination where Primary Election Nominee Receives More Than One Nomination for Same Office

(7 days after election)

N.J.S.A. 19:14-9

June 10

Deadline for Receipt of Cure Form to County Boards of Election

(no later than 48 hours (2 days) prior to the final certification of the results of the election)

N.J.S.A. 19:63-17

June 12

Canvass of Primary Election Votes by County Clerks

N.J.S.A. 19:23-55

June 15

Deadline for Filing of Election Contest Petitions for Primary Election

(up to 12 days after election)

N.J.S.A. 19:29-3; N.J.S.A. 19:11-1

2026 Primary Election Timeline

June 15

Deadline for Municipal Clerk to Certify to County Clerk and County Board of Elections the Names of Duly Elected County Committee Members

(within 13 days after primary election)

N.J.S.A. 19:23-54

June 15

Deadline for County Clerk to Certify to County Board of Elections the Names of Duly Elected County Committee Members

(within 13 days after primary election)

N.J.S.A. 19:23-54

June 15

Deadline for Recount Applications for Primary Election

(within 3 days after the certification of the results of the election)

N.J.S.A. 19:28-1

June 17

Deadline for Preparation of Emergency and Provisional Ballot Reports by Each County Board of Election for the Primary Election

(within 15 days after the election)

N.J.S.A. 19:53B-21; N.J.S.A. 19:53C-21

June 19

Deadline for Filing of Acceptance of Nomination by Successful Primary Election Write-in Nominee

(on or before the 7th day following the date of the certification of the results of the primary)

N.J.S.A. 19:23-16