

# Pennsylvania Primary:

## What You Need to Know Before the Deadline



**As the political landscape gears up for the Pennsylvania primary, voters across the state are gearing up to make their voices heard in the 2024 Primary Election.**

While the state might not hold as much sway in the primary as it does in the general election, there's still much at stake, with various positions on the ballot specific to Pennsylvania up for grabs. Here's a breakdown of what you need to know about the primary and how to register to vote before the looming deadline.

[The Pennsylvania primary is scheduled for April 23, with the general election slated for November 5.](#) For those looking to participate in the primary, the registration deadline is fast approaching on April 8. To be eligible, voters must be at least 18 years old on the day of the election, U.S. citizens, and residents of Pennsylvania for at least 30 days prior.

For those who miss the primary deadline, there's still an opportunity to register for the general election until October 21. Registration can be completed online through the Pennsylvania voter services website, in-person at your county voter registration office, or by mailing in a printed application. It's important to note that mailed registrations must be received by the deadline to be considered valid.

In a recent development, Pennsylvania residents are now automatically registered to vote when they obtain their driver's license unless they choose to opt out. Additionally, special provisions are in place for active-duty military personnel, hospitalized or bedridden veterans, allowing them to register at any time through resources provided by [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov).

If you're already registered to vote in Pennsylvania, you only need to update your registration if you've changed your name, political party affiliation, or address within the state. However, if you've relocated from another state, re-registration is required. The deadline for updating registration coincides with the April 8 registration deadline for the primary.

To check your voter registration status, you can conveniently do so online through the Pennsylvania voter services [website](#).

Come primary day, voters will have the opportunity to select their party's nominee for president, as well as their representatives in the U.S. House and Senate. At the state level, voters will also cast their ballots for nominees for attorney general, auditor general, treasurer, and in the General Assembly all House seats and half of Senate Seats are on the ballot. Additionally, delegates for the parties' national conventions will be chosen, adding another layer of significance to the primary process.

The presidential race is once again poised to be a focal point, given the state's pivotal role in recent elections. President Joe Biden secured a significant victory in Pennsylvania in 2020, amidst a contentious election overshadowed by the COVID-19 pandemic and baseless claims of fraud. This year, Biden is expected to be the presumptive Democratic nominee, while Trump leads the Republican Party ticket, despite the appearance of additional candidates on the ballot.

In the U.S. Senate race, Democratic incumbent Bob Casey faces Republican David McCormick. Casey, a three-term senator from Scranton, seeks reelection against McCormick, a former hedge fund manager and government official. The Senate race is anticipated to be closely watched, as Democrats aim to maintain control of the chamber, with a narrow margin currently in their favor.

All 17 members of Pennsylvania's U.S. House delegation are up for reelection, with representation divided between Democrats and Republicans. Additionally, elections for the state General Assembly are underway, comprising the House of Representatives and the Senate. [With Democrats holding a slim majority in the state House](#) and [Republicans in control of the Senate](#), these races will be crucial in shaping Pennsylvania's legislative landscape. Voters can access information about candidates in their districts through resources like the state's legislator lookup tool and [VOTE411](#) from the League of Women Voters Education Fund. Learn more about the Pa. House races in [Allegheny County](#) and the [Southwest](#).

Pennsylvania operates closed primaries, meaning voters must register as a member of a party to participate in the primary. This structure excludes independent and third-party voters unless they align themselves with one of the major parties. [Notably, approximately 15% of registered voters in Pennsylvania fall into the unaffiliated or third-party category.](#)

Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on primary day, and first-time voters at polling locations must present an approved form of identification. Alternatively, all Pennsylvania voters have the option to vote by mail without needing an excuse. However, to vote by mail in the primary, a mail ballot must be requested and returned to the local county board of elections by 5 p.m. on April 16.

In Pennsylvania, individuals who have completed the terms of their incarceration for a felony conviction and have been released from a correctional facility or halfway house by the election date are eligible to vote. This includes pretrial detainees, individuals on probation or parole, and those under house arrest. However, individuals currently incarcerated or in alternative correctional facilities on pre-release status during the election are not eligible to vote. Additionally, individuals convicted of violating the Pennsylvania Election Code within the last four years are excluded from voting.

As the Pennsylvania primary rapidly approaches, it's crucial for eligible voters to register in time and familiarize themselves with the voting process to ensure their voices are heard in this pivotal election.