



# MONTANA 2012 PRIMARY AND GENERAL ELECTION CALENDAR

Secretary of State Linda McCulloch  
 Elections and Government Services Division  
[sos.mt.gov](http://sos.mt.gov) • [soselections@mt.gov](mailto:soselections@mt.gov)

Deadline		Statute
<b>January 1 - 31</b>	Period for county election administrators to mail forwardable address confirmation cards to electors on the annual absentee list	<a href="#">13-13-212</a>
<b>January 12</b>	First day for candidates to file for office	<a href="#">13-10-201</a>
<b>February 26</b>	Deadline for county governing body to change precinct boundaries	<a href="#">13-3-102(1)</a>
<b>Within 3 days</b>	County governing bodies to certify precinct boundary changes to election administrators	<a href="#">13-3-102(2)</a>
<b>Within 10 days</b>	County governing bodies deliver to the election administrators a legal description and map showing borders of all precincts and districts in which elections are held within the county (election administrators submit map to Secretary of State)	<a href="#">13-3-103</a>
<b>March 5</b>	Deadline for independent, minor party, indigent and new political party petitions to be submitted to election administrators	<a href="#">13-10-201(6)(b)</a> <a href="#">13-10-503</a> <a href="#">13-10-601</a>
<b>March 12</b>	Deadline for candidates to file for office	<a href="#">13-10-201</a>
	Deadline for candidates to withdraw primary election candidacy	<a href="#">13-10-325</a>
	Deadline for county election administrators to file verified independent, minor party, indigent and new political party petitions with the Secretary of State	<a href="#">13-10-201(6)(b)</a> <a href="#">13-10-503</a> <a href="#">13-10-601</a>
<b>Within 5 days of filing for office</b>	Candidates must file appropriate paperwork with Commissioner of Political Practices in order for their names to appear on the ballot	<a href="#">13-37-201</a>
<b>March 12 – 20</b>	Period for election administrators to certify to Commissioner of Political Practices the names of all <u>county</u> candidates who complied with MCA Title 13, Chapter 37	<a href="#">13-37-126(1)</a> <a href="#">13-37-225</a>
<b>March 12 – 22</b>	Period for Secretary of State to certify names and designation of statewide and state district candidates to election administrators	<a href="#">13-10-208(1)</a>
<b>After March 12</b>	Election administrators determine whether local nonpartisan primary election and parties' primary elections need to be held; then notify governing body	<a href="#">13-10-209</a> <a href="#">13-14-115</a>
<b>March 20</b>	Deadline for Commissioner of Political Practices to notify Secretary of State and election administrators of the names of any candidates that have not complied with the provisions of MCA Title 13, Chapter 37 and that the candidates' name should not appear on the official ballot	<a href="#">13-37-126(3)</a>
<b>March 22</b>	Deadline for governing body to decide that a local nonpartisan primary must be held, if election administrator determines that the election need not be held	<a href="#">13-14-115</a>
<b>Starting not earlier than April 9</b>	Election administrators must publish or broadcast notice specifying the day regular voter registration will close and the availability of late registration (three times in the four weeks preceding close of registration)	<a href="#">13-2-301</a>
<b>April 20</b>	County central committees of parties eligible to nominate candidates in the primary election submit to election administrators lists of electors to serve as election judges	<a href="#">13-4-102</a>
	Election administrators must send ballots to absent military and overseas electors as soon as the ballot is printed and by no later than this date	<a href="#">13-13-205</a>

<b>April 27</b>	Deadline for write-in candidates for county, district or statewide office to file a Declaration of Intent for the primary election	<a href="#">13-10-211</a>
<b>May 6</b>	Date by which legislative candidates must live in appropriate legislative district (for six months next preceding General Election)	<a href="#">Article V</a> <a href="#">Section 4</a> <a href="#">MT Const</a>
	Deadline for county governing body to designate the polling place for each precinct and to appoint election judges for each precinct	<a href="#">13-3-105(1)</a> <a href="#">13-4-101</a>
<b>May 7</b>	Close of regular voter registration (registration cards postmarked by this date and received within 3 days are accepted for regular registration)	<a href="#">13-2-301</a>
	Date by which primary election absentee ballots must be available for absentee voting	<a href="#">13-13-205</a>
	Date by which ballots are mailed to electors on the annual absentee list	<a href="#">13-13-212</a>
	Beginning of period during which election administrators publicly test and certify that each type of voting system used in an election is performing properly	<a href="#">13-17-212</a>
	Deadline for election administrators to mail a primary election voter information pamphlet to voters on the active voter list	<a href="#">13-27-410(4)</a>
<b>Prior to Primary Election</b>	Any election judge serving in 2012 elections must attend a training and obtain a certificate of instruction prior to the primary election in even-numbered years	<a href="#">13-4-203</a>
	County governing body appoints at least 3 individuals to serve on the county post-election audit committee	<a href="#">13-17-504</a>
<b>May 8</b>	Beginning of late registration	<a href="#">13-2-304</a>
<b>May 10</b>	Registration cards postmarked by May 7 and received by this date are accepted for regular registration	<a href="#">13-2-301(3)</a>
<b>May 17</b>	Deadline for election administrators to enter into statewide voter registration database all voter registration applications received by regular registration deadline	<a href="#">13-2-115</a>
<b>After May 17</b>	Secretary of State certifies the official statewide voter registration list	<a href="#">13-2-115</a>
<b>May 26 - June 3</b>	Election administrators must publish or broadcast: a diagram showing the voting system and a sample of the ballot layout (in newspaper only), a statement of the locations where voting systems are on public exhibition, and instructions on how to vote	<a href="#">13-17-203</a>
	Election administrators must publish or broadcast locations of the precinct polling places, including accessibility designations for each polling place	<a href="#">13-3-105(2)</a> <a href="#">13-3-207</a>
<b>June 1</b>	Beginning of period for printing of primary election precinct register	<a href="#">13-2-116</a>
	After 5:00 p.m. - Beginning of period for qualified electors who are prevented from voting at the polls as a result of illness or health emergency, occurring between 5:00 p.m. of the Friday before the election and noon on election day, to request to vote by special absentee ballot	<a href="#">13-13-211(2)</a> <a href="#">13-13-212(2)</a>
<b>June 4</b>	Noon - Deadline for application to be made for absentee ballot	<a href="#">13-13-211(1)</a>

	Noon - Absentee ballots are issued to late registrants up until this time on the day before election day; late registrants who submit a registration card after noon must return to the election office on election day to receive an absentee ballot	<a href="#">13-2-304</a>
	Noon - election administrators must pull supplemental precinct registers	<a href="#">Administrative Procedure</a>
	<b>NEW:</b> Election Administrators may, at their option, conduct early preparation of absentee ballots as provided in statute and administrative rule	<a href="#">13-13-241</a> <a href="#">HB 530</a>
<b>JUNE 5</b>	<b>PRIMARY NOMINATING ELECTION</b>	<a href="#">13-1-107(1)</a>
	Election administrators or designees must randomly test and certify 5% of each type of voting system (a minimum of one per county), to validate the accuracy of voted paper ballots with the voting system results	<a href="#">44.3.1713(1)(f)</a> <a href="#">ARM</a>
	Noon - End of period for qualified electors who are prevented from voting at the polls as a result of illness or health emergency, occurring between 5:00 p.m. of the Friday before the election and noon on election day, to request to vote by special absentee ballot	<a href="#">13-13-211(2)</a> <a href="#">13-13-212(2)</a>
	8:00 p.m. - End of late registration (or when all individuals in line at 8:00 p.m. have registered)	<a href="#">13-2-304</a>
<b>June 5 – 11</b>	Period during which the election administrators may open a package containing a precinct register to resolve provisional ballots	<a href="#">13-15-301(2)</a>
<b>June 11</b>	3:00 p.m. - Counting of provisional ballots that are not resolved by the end of election day may not begin prior to this date and time	<a href="#">13-15-107</a>
	3:00 p.m. - Deadline for election administrators to receive Federal Write-In Absentee Ballots (FWABs) that were sent by absent military and overseas electors by 8:00 p.m. on election day	<a href="#">13-21-206</a>
<b>June 12 – 14</b>	Period for State Board of Canvassers to randomly choose races, ballot issue and precincts to be audited for post-election audit	<a href="#">13-17-505</a>
<b>June 13 – 18</b>	Post-election audits conducted by machine-tabulation counties (after notification by State Board of Canvassers of races, ballot issue and precincts chosen)	<a href="#">13-17-506</a>
<b>June 8 - 19</b> (at least 1 day after post-election audit, if applicable)	County canvass completed - Board declares nominated the individuals having received the highest number of votes cast for each county-certified office and proclaims adoption or rejection of county ballot issues	<a href="#">13-15-401</a> <a href="#">13-15-405</a> <a href="#">13-17-506</a>
<b>June 22</b>	Signatures due to election administrators for ballot issues for certification; deadline for withdrawal of signatures	<a href="#">13-27-301</a>
<b>Within 5 days of official canvass</b>	Deadline for candidates to initiate contest of primary election nomination (after county or state canvass, as applicable)	<a href="#">13-36-102(1)</a>
	Deadline for unsuccessful primary election candidates to apply for a recount, if applicable (after county or state canvass, as applicable)	<a href="#">13-16-201</a> <a href="#">13-16-301</a>
	Election administrators send official canvass results to Secretary of State by certified mail	<a href="#">13-15-501</a>
<b>Within 10 days of official canvass</b>	Deadline for successful primary write-in nominees to file a written Declaration of Acceptance (after county or state canvass, as applicable)	<a href="#">13-10-204</a>
<b>July 2</b>	State canvass must be completed - Board declares nominated the individuals having received the highest number of votes cast for each state-certified office	<a href="#">13-15-502</a> <a href="#">13-15-507</a>

<b>July 20</b>	Deadline for election administrators to file certified ballot issue petitions in the Secretary of State's office – only signatures on petitions received by this deadline can be tabulated by the Secretary of State	<a href="#">13-27-104</a>
<b>August 13</b>	Deadline for candidates to withdraw general election candidacy	<a href="#">13-10-325</a>
<b>August 15</b>	Deadline for presidential independent and presidential minor party candidates to submit petition signatures to election administrators for verification and certification	<a href="#">13-10-504</a>
<b>August 22</b>	Deadline for election administrators to file certified petition signatures for presidential independent and presidential minor party candidates	<a href="#">13-10-504</a>
<b>August 23</b>	Deadline for Secretary of State to certify names of statewide and state district candidates and ballot issues to election administrators; deadline for election administrators to certify for the ballot the names of local candidates and ballot issues	<a href="#">13-12-201</a>
<b>Starting not earlier than September 11</b>	Election administrators must publish or broadcast notice specifying the day regular voter registration will close and the availability of late registration (three times in the four weeks preceding close of registration)	<a href="#">13-2-301</a>
<b>September 21</b>	Election administrators must send ballots to absent military and overseas electors as soon as the ballot is printed and by no later than this date	<a href="#">13-13-205</a>
<b>September 28</b>	Deadline for write-in candidates for county, district or statewide office to file a Declaration of Intent for the general election	<a href="#">13-10-211</a>
<b>October 9</b>	Close of regular voter registration (registration cards postmarked by this date and received within 3 days are accepted for regular registration)	<a href="#">13-2-301</a>
	Date by which general election absentee ballots must be available for voting	<a href="#">13-13-205</a>
	Date by which ballots are mailed to electors on the annual absentee list	<a href="#">13-13-212</a>
	Beginning of period during which election administrators publicly test and certify that each type of voting system used in an election is performing properly	<a href="#">13-17-212</a>
	Deadline for election administrators to mail a general election voter information pamphlet to voters on the active voter list	<a href="#">13-27-410(4)</a>
<b>Prior to General Election</b>	County governing body appoints at least 3 individuals to serve on the county post-election audit committee	<a href="#">13-17-503</a>
<b>October 10</b>	Beginning of late registration	<a href="#">13-2-304</a>
<b>October 12</b>	Registration cards postmarked by October 9 and received by this date are accepted for regular registration	<a href="#">13-2-301(3)</a>
<b>October 19</b>	Deadline for election administrators to enter into statewide voter registration database all voter registration applications received by regular registration deadline	<a href="#">13-2-115</a>
<b>After October 19</b>	Secretary of State certifies the official statewide voter registration list	<a href="#">13-2-115</a>
<b>October 27 – November 4</b>	Election administrators must publish or broadcast: a diagram showing the voting system and sample ballot layout (in newspaper only), a statement of the locations where voting systems are on public exhibition, and instructions on how to vote	<a href="#">13-17-203</a>
	Election administrators must publish or broadcast locations of the precinct polling places, including accessibility designations for each polling place	<a href="#">13-3-105(2)</a> <a href="#">13-3-207</a>

<b>November 2</b>	Beginning of period for printing of general election precinct register	<a href="#">13-2-116</a>
	After 5:00 p.m. - Beginning of period for qualified electors who are prevented from voting at the polls as a result of illness or health emergency, occurring between 5:00 p.m. of the Friday before the election and noon on election day, to request to vote by special absentee ballot	<a href="#">13-13-211(2)</a> <a href="#">13-13-212(2)</a>
<b>November 5</b>	Noon - Deadline for application to be made for absentee ballot	<a href="#">13-13-211(1)</a>
	Noon - Absentee ballots are issued to late registrants up until this time on the day before election day; late registrants who submit a registration card after noon must return to the election office on election day to receive an absentee ballot	<a href="#">13-2-304</a>
	Noon – election administrators must pull supplemental precinct registers	Administrative Procedure
	<b>NEW:</b> Election Administrators may, at their option, conduct early preparation of absentee ballots as provided in statute and administrative rule	<a href="#">13-13-241</a> <a href="#">HB 530</a>
<b>NOVEMBER 6</b>	<b>FEDERAL GENERAL ELECTION</b>	<a href="#">13-1-104(1)</a>
	Election administrators or designees must randomly test and certify 5% of each type of voting system (a minimum of one per county), to validate the accuracy of voted paper ballots with the voting system results	<a href="#">44.3.1713(1)(f)</a> <a href="#">ARM</a>
	Noon - End of period for qualified electors who are prevented from voting at the polls as a result of illness or health emergency, occurring between 5:00 p.m. of the Friday before the election and noon on election day, to request to vote by special absentee ballot	<a href="#">13-13-211(2)</a> <a href="#">13-13-212(2)</a>
	8:00 p.m. - End of late registration (or when all individuals in line at 8:00 p.m. have registered)	<a href="#">13-2-304</a>
<b>November 7- December 17</b>	Period for Commissioner of Political Practices to notify Secretary of State of the names of all elected statewide and state district candidates who have complied with MCA Title 13, Chapter 37	<a href="#">13-37-127(2)</a>
	Period for election administrators to certify to Commissioner of Political Practices the names of all <u>county</u> candidates who have complied with MCA Title 13, Chapter 37	<a href="#">13-37-127</a>
	Period for Commissioner of Political Practices to certify to election administrators the names of all elected county candidates who complied with MCA Title 13, Chapter 3 so that certificates of election can be issued	<a href="#">13-37-127</a>
<b>November 6 – 14</b>	Period during which the election administrators may open a package containing a precinct register to resolve provisional ballots	<a href="#">13-15-301(2)</a>
<b>November 12</b>	3:00 p.m. - Counting of provisional ballots that are not resolved by the end of election day may not begin prior to this date and time	<a href="#">13-15-107</a>
	3:00 p.m. - Deadline for election administrators to receive Federal Write-In Absentee Ballots (FWABs) that were sent by absent military and overseas electors by 8 p.m. on election day	<a href="#">13-21-206</a>
<b>November 13 – 15</b>	Period for State Board of Canvassers to randomly choose races, ballot issue and precincts to be audited for post-election audit	<a href="#">13-17-505</a>
<b>November 14 – 19</b>	Post-election audits conducted by machine-tabulation counties (after notification by State Board of Canvassers of races, ballot issue & precincts chosen)	<a href="#">13-17-506</a>

<b>November 9 - 20</b> (at least 1 day after post-election audit, if applicable)	County canvass completed - Board declares elected the individuals having received the highest number of votes cast for each county-certified office and proclaims the adoption or rejection of county ballot issues	<a href="#">13-15-401</a> <a href="#">13-15-405</a> <a href="#">13-17-506</a>
<b>Within 5 days of official canvass</b>	Deadline for unsuccessful general election candidates to apply for a recount, if applicable (after county or state canvass, as applicable)	<a href="#">13-16-201</a> <a href="#">13-16-301</a>
	Election administrators send official canvass results to Secretary of State by certified mail	<a href="#">13-15-501</a>
<b>Within 10 days of official canvass</b>	Deadline for successful general write-in candidates to file a written Declaration of Acceptance (after county or state canvass, as applicable)	<a href="#">13-10-204</a>
<b>December 3</b>	State canvass must be completed - Board declares elected the individuals having received the highest number of votes cast for each state-certified office and proclaims the adoption or rejection of state ballot issues	<a href="#">13-15-502</a> <a href="#">13-15-507</a>
<b>After canvass</b>	Secretary of State certifies legislative roster	<a href="#">5-2-211</a>



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Montana Secretary of State Linda McCulloch

Elections and Government Services

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### Election Information

#### My Voter Page

Visit the Secretary of State's webpage at [sos.mt.gov](http://sos.mt.gov) for the following services on My Voter Page:

- Check your registration status
- Find your polling place, including a map with directions to the polling place
- Check the status of your absentee ballot, if applicable
- See a sample ballot, when available

#### Filing for Office

Information on filing as a candidate for a statewide, state district, or legislative office can be found at <http://sos.mt.gov/Elections/Filing>.

#### Late Registration

An elector may register or change the elector's voter registration information after the close of regular registration specified in [13-2-301](#), MCA, and vote in the election if the election administrator in the county where the elector resides receives and verifies the elector's voter registration information prior to the close of polls on election day.

A late registrant may vote in an election only if the elector obtains the ballot in person from the election administrator and returns it to the location designated by the election administrator, either in person or by mail, subject to applicable deadlines.

Pursuant to [13-2-304](#), MCA, election administrators close late registration at noon on the day before election day and reopen late registration on election day. Any elector wishing to register after noon on the day before the election may do so by submitting a voter registration application at the election office the day before election day or on election day during polling hours, and appearing at the election office on election day in order to vote.

Absent military and overseas electors are eligible for late registration, although they are not required to appear at the county election office in order to late register.

#### Opening and Closing of Polling Places

According to [13-1-106](#), MCA, polls must open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., except that polling places having fewer than 400 registered electors must be open from at least noon to 8 p.m. (or until all registered electors in any precinct have voted). Contact your county election office for your polling place hours.

#### ID for Voting

All voters must present ID when voting at the polling place. ID can be a current photo ID with the voter's name, or if photo ID is not available, a current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, notice of confirmation of voter registration, government check or other government document that shows the voter's name and current address.

#### Provisional Ballots

Pursuant to [13-15-107](#), MCA, counting of provisional ballots that are not resolved by the end of election day may not begin prior to 3:00 p.m. the sixth day after the election. Proof of registration or required identification must be provided to the county election office by 5:00 p.m. the day after the election, or mailed to the county election office by the day after the election. Election officials or election workers shall notify each elector who cast a provisional ballot, by the most expedient means possible, whether or not the elector's ballot was counted, and the reason(s) why or why not.

#### Voter Info

Contact your [Election Administrator](#) at your county election office. Contact the Secretary of State at [soselections@mt.gov](mailto:soselections@mt.gov) or at 1-888-884-8683 (VOTE). Mailing address: PO Box 202801, Helena, MT 59620-2801.