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# BE COUNTED!

# VOTE

## PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY

### VOTING

#### How can I vote in the primary?

You may vote in these party elections if you are a registered voter. There are separate ballots for the Democratic and the Republican parties. If you are enrolled in one of these parties, you will be given that party's ballot when you vote.

If you are not enrolled in either party, you may still vote in the primary, but you must ask for the party ballot you prefer. You will then be listed as a member of that party. If you want to change your party or return to your unenrolled (independent) status, fill out a change card available at the polls or notify your local election officials in writing. If you cannot vote in person, contact your local election officials for details on absentee voting.

#### How can I register to vote?

If you are a citizen of the United States who is a Massachusetts resident and who will be 18 years old by election day you may register to vote. Contact your city or town clerk for details on special and regular registration places and times. In order to vote in the presidential primary, you must be registered at least 28 days before the day of the primary.

#### Related Publications

Register and Vote  
Absentee Voting  
Ward and Town Committees—Election  
and Organization  
State Committees—Election and  
Organization

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## PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY

### **What is the Presidential Primary?**

The presidential primary in Massachusetts is a political party election which precedes the national party convention. You vote for the candidate you prefer to be your party's candidate for president in the November election.

Your vote is then reflected in the selection of delegates to the national party convention at which your party's presidential candidate is nominated.

### **When is the primary?**

In 1980, the presidential primary is scheduled to be held on March 4.

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## THE BALLOT

### **What will be on the ballot?**

There are three sections to the ballot.

#### **Presidential Candidates**

You indicate your choice for your party's presidential nominee. Candidates for president are listed followed by a choice designated 'no preference' in case you do not wish to vote for any of the listed candidates. There is also a space for a write-in vote, in case you wish to vote for a candidate not listed on the ballot.

#### **State Committee Candidates**

You select a state committeeman and a state committeewoman from your district. They are your elected representatives on your party's state committee. One state committeeman and one state committeewoman are elected from each of the forty state senate districts in the state.

#### **Town or Ward Committee Candidates**

You vote for members of your town or ward political committee to represent the party from your neighborhood. One or more slates (groups of candidates) may be listed as well as candidates running as individuals. You may vote for a slate as a whole or for individual candidates. Your ballot will indicate how many you may vote for. The number varies from 3 to 35.

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## PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE

### **How do presidential candidates get on the ballot?**

The names of presidential candidates are placed on the ballot in one of three ways:

- Candidates may file nomination papers with sufficient signatures
- The State Secretary may place candidates on the ballot who have been generally advocated or recognized in national news media
- The Chairman of the party's state committee may designate names to be listed

### **How is the presidential preference vote used to choose the party's candidate?**

Your presidential preference vote is used to select delegates to the national convention. Delegates to the conventions actually nominate each party's candidate for president.

Delegates are the representatives from each state who express the voters' choice of candidates at the national party conventions. The national party organization designates the number of delegates each state can send to the national convention.

In Massachusetts, these delegates are not listed on the ballot. Instead, the parties must adopt plans for delegate selection which will reflect the vote for president at the primary. In the plan, candidates are awarded delegates according to the vote received in the primary. There are delegates representing each congressional district and at-large delegates representing the state as a whole. Massachusetts delegates are bound by law to vote for the presidential candidate each was selected to represent for one ballot at the national convention.