

NEW MEXICO

VOTING IS CHANGING

A Guide for All Voters

Starting in **June 2026**, New Mexico is moving to a **“Semi-Open” Primary**. You no longer have to join a party to vote in a primary election.

IF YOU ARE AN INDEPENDENT VOTER...

If you are registered as **“Declined to State” (DTS)** or **“No Party Affiliation”** (also known as an independent voter):

- **You can now vote** in either the Democratic or Republican Primary.
- **You keep your status.** You do **not** have to officially join a party to get a ballot.
- **You choose at the polls.** Simply tell the poll worker which party’s ballot you want to use for that day. Your registration will stay DTS or “independent”.

IF YOU ARE REGISTERED WITH A MAJOR PARTY...

If you are currently a **Democrat or Republican**, you have two choices for how you want to handle the primary:

- **1. Stay with your current party:** You don't need to do anything. You will simply receive your party's ballot like usual.
- **2. Vote in the OTHER party's primary:** You cannot “cross over” at the polling place on Election Day. To vote in a different party's primary, **PRIOR TO THE START OF VOTING**, you must:
 - **Switch to the other party directly (e.g., Democrat to Republican).**
 - **OR switch to DTS or “independent”.** This is the more flexible option—once you are an independent voter, you can choose either ballot every primary from then on without having to update your registration again.

⚠️ CRITICAL DEADLINE: Unlike new voters, if you are already in a major party, you **CANNOT** switch to another party (or to DTS/independent) at the polls on Election Day. You must make this change at least 28 days before the election at [NMVOTE.ORG](https://nmvote.org).

During a primary election, voters registered with a **MINOR** party have the option to change their party through same day voter registration at polling locations.

HOW TO UPDATE YOUR REGISTRATION

- **ONLINE:** Visit **NMVOTE.ORG** (Requires New Mexico ID).
- **BY MAIL:** Download a form at **NMVOTE.ORG** or pick one up at any Library or MVD.
- **IN PERSON:** Visit your local County Clerk's office.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: If I'm an independent voter (registered as DTS or No Party Affiliation) and vote in a Republican or Democratic primary, does my registration change?

A: No. You are simply “requesting” a ballot for that day only. You are not required to change the party on your voter registration.

Q: I am registered with a minor party (e.g., Green, Libertarian). Can I vote in the major primaries?

A: Voters registered with a minor party can, through same day voter registration, update their party to a major party and vote in the primary. Only those registered with major parties are prohibited from making that change at the polling location.

Q: Can I vote in BOTH primaries?

A: No. You must choose one ballot. You can vote in the Democratic primary OR the Republican primary, but not both.

Q: What if I forget to switch my party until Election Day?

A: New voters can use Same-Day Registration to pick a party and vote. However, if you are already registered with a MAJOR party, state law prevents you from switching to a different party on Election Day. Plan ahead!

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER:

Primary Election Day: Tuesday, June 2, 2026

Voter Registration Deadline (Online/Mail): May 5, 2026

Early Voting Starts: May 5, 2026 (at County Clerk offices)

Expanded Early Voting Begins: May 16, 2026