



Lancaster  
Chamber

# Elections Guide

A close-up photograph of a person's hand, wearing a light brown knitted sleeve, holding a white ballot and placing it into the slot of a white ballot box. The ballot is tilted, showing the text '2025 Municipal Primary' in blue. The background is a blue gradient with a pattern of overlapping circles in various shades of blue.

2025  
Municipal Primary

# How to Use This Elections Guide

**Federal, statewide, and local elections have a significant impact on how we do business.**

Before you head to the polls, make sure you have all the knowledge needed to make an educated decision. Browse this elections guide to learn more about the current election landscape, the elections process, and how to ensure your vote is counted. Feel free to share this with your colleagues and employees to double the impact!



BIZPAC is a voluntary, non-profit association which is independent of any political party, candidate or political organization. BIZPAC is dedicated to the protection, preservation and furtherance of the private enterprise system and to the improvement of the business climate in Pennsylvania. The activities and contributions of this non-partisan PAC are directed by a board of directors composed of Chamber members.

# Primary Elections

## What is a primary election?

In Pennsylvania, primary elections give registered Democratic and Republican voters the opportunity to choose which candidates will represent their party in the November general election. Because Pennsylvania has a closed primary system, voters can only cast ballots for candidates within their registered party. Primary elections are a critical step in the democratic process, helping to narrow the field of candidates and influence the choices voters will see on the general election ballot.

## Who can vote in a primary election?

In Pennsylvania, only voters registered with a political party – either Democratic or Republican – can participate in that party's primary election. This closed primary system means that independent and third-party voters are excluded from voting in the primary elections (unless there's a ballot question).

You are eligible for voter registration if you have been a citizen of the United States for at least one month before the next election; you have been a resident of Pennsylvania and your election district for at least 30 days before the next election; you will be at least 18 years old or older on the day of the election. Voters can update their registration if they move, change their name, or wish to change their political party affiliation.

## Important Dates: In-person and mail in ballots

**May 5**

Last day to register to vote for the primary election. [vote.pa.gov/register](https://vote.pa.gov/register)

Scan this  
QR Code



**May 13**

Last day to apply for a mail-in ballot. [vote.pa.gov/mailballot](https://vote.pa.gov/mailballot)

Scan this  
QR Code



Mail-in ballot or absentee ballots must be requested by 5pm. Registered voters can apply for a Mail-in Ballot online, download, print, and mail in an application, or fill out an application in-person at the Lancaster County Office of Elections.

**May 20**

Polls open from 7am-8pm. [vote.pa.gov/mailballotstatus](https://vote.pa.gov/mailballotstatus)

Scan this  
QR Code



Completed mail-in ballots must be received by the Lancaster County Office of Elections by 8pm. Ballots may be mailed to: P.O. Box 2139 Lancaster, PA 17608. Track the progress of your absentee or mail-in ballot: [vote.pa.gov/mailballotstatus](https://vote.pa.gov/mailballotstatus) Voters may drop off their own ballots at: 150 N Queen St. Suite 117 Lancaster, PA 17603.

# What's on the ballot?

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## PA Superior Court Judge

Reviews appeals in most criminal and civil cases from county courts. There are 15 judges who serve 10-year terms. Their decisions can impact statewide legal precedents.

## PA Commonwealth Court Judge

Handles cases involving state and local governments, including laws about taxes, elections, labor, and land use. Also hears lawsuits involving or against the state. Judges serve 10-year terms.

## Magisterial District Judge

Oversees small claims, traffic offenses, landlord-tenant disputes, and preliminary criminal hearings.

## Lancaster County Offices:

- **Controller:** Manages audits and county finances.
- **Recorder of Deeds:** Maintains real estate and property transaction records.

## Local Government Offices:

- **Mayor:** The mayor serves as the chief executive officer of a city, overseeing city departments and implementing policies. At the borough level, the mayor is the chief law enforcement officer and helps shape local ordinances.
- **City Council:** City council members legislate and make decisions on city ordinances, budgets, and policies.
- **Borough Council:** Similar to city councils but for boroughs, these councils handle local governance and community affairs.
- **Auditor:** The auditor reviews and monitors the financial operations of local government entities to ensure transparency and accountability.
- **Township Supervisor/Commissioner:** These officials manage township operations, including zoning, infrastructure, and community services.
- **Tax Collector:** Responsible for collecting local taxes, including property and income taxes, to fund municipal services.
- **Judges of Election:** These officials oversee the conduct of elections at polling places, ensuring that voting procedures are followed and that the election is fair.

## School Board

School board members govern public school districts, making decisions on budgets, policies, curriculum, and staffing.



# How Do I Vote in a Primary Election?



## If you're voting in-person...

- First, find your polling location. If you've recently moved, make sure your voter registration is updated so you're assigned to the correct polling place.
- Plan what time you'll go and how you'll get there. In Pennsylvania, polls are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. If you're in line by 8 p.m., you have the right to vote.
- Know what to bring. If it's your first time voting at a particular polling place, you'll need to show ID; acceptable forms include a driver's license, U.S. passport, student ID, or utility bill with your name and address.



Scan this QR Code to  
find your polling place!

Ask yourself **WHEN**  
you plan to vote:

Add it to your  
calendar today!

Ask yourself **HOW**  
you plan to vote:

By mail or on  
election day?

## If you're voting by mail-in ballot, follow these steps:

- All registered voters in Pennsylvania are eligible to vote by mail—no excuse needed. Applications for mail-in ballots are available in multiple languages and should be submitted as early as possible to ensure enough time to receive, complete, and return your ballot before the deadline.
- Once completed, your mail-in ballot can be returned by mail or delivered in person to the Lancaster County Board of Elections. To be counted, it must be received by 8 p.m. on Election Day.

## Here's how to vote by mail step by step:

- Once you receive your ballot, carefully follow the instructions to mark your choices.
- Place your completed ballot in the secrecy envelope labeled "official election ballot," then seal it.
- Insert the secrecy envelope into the official return envelope, making sure to complete and sign the back. Unsigned ballots may not be counted.
- Return your ballot by 8 p.m. on Election Day. You can mail it to: P.O. Box 2139, Lancaster, PA 17608 or drop it off in person at: 150 N Queen St., Suite 117, Lancaster, PA 17603. Voters must return their own ballot; ballots submitted by others will not be accepted. at 150 N Queen St. Suite 117 Lancaster, PA 17603.



Scan this QR Code to check  
the status of your mail-in ballot

# Voter Information

## Check your registration status

Use your name, your PennDOT Driver's License, or PennDOT ID.

[pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/voterregistrationstatus.aspx](http://pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/voterregistrationstatus.aspx)

Scan this  
QR Code



## You can register to vote if you're:

- ✓ A U.S. citizen at least 30 days before the next election.
- ✓ A resident of Pennsylvania and your election district for at least 30 days before the next election.
- ✓ At least 18 years of age on the day of the next election.

Check your registration status using your name, your PennDOT Driver's License, or PennDOT ID.

## Incarcerated Voters & Returning Citizens:

In Pennsylvania, you only lose your right to vote if you are currently incarcerated for a felony conviction. If you lost your voting rights because of a conviction, you could register to vote immediately after release. Your voting rights are not restricted by pretrial detention, misdemeanors, probation, or parole. Note: This does not apply if you have been convicted of a violation of the Pennsylvania Election Code.

## Voters Without Traditional Residence:

If you do not have a street address or a permanent residence, use the map on the back of the voter registration form to show where you live or spend most of your time, with landmarks and road names. If you do not receive mail at your residential address, the mailing address on their registration form can be a PO box, local shelter, advocacy organization, outreach center, or the home of someone who will accept mail for you.

# About the Lancaster Chamber



## Vision:

Lancaster County. A thriving community for all.

## Mission:

Create the environment, facilitate partnerships, and lead on issues that elevate business success.

## Core Values

<b>Serve</b>	We commit to a culture of service.
<b>Connect</b>	We maximize connections that grow networks and accelerate business success.
<b>Solve</b>	We approach all issues with a solution-oriented mindset.
<b>Lead</b>	We pledge to lead on behalf of the business community.

At the Lancaster Chamber, we believe that a strong community and economy are built on the foundation of informed and active citizenship. We are dedicated to promoting civic learning and engagement through a non-partisan approach, ensuring that all Lancasterians are equipped to make knowledgeable decisions in local, state, and federal elections. By fostering an environment where civic participation is encouraged and valued, we aim to empower individuals and strengthen our community's overall vitality.

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# Thank you for making a plan to vote!

## Impact Update:

Sign up for our e-newsletter to stay up-to-date  
on all pre- and post- elections insights!

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QR Code



**Lancaster Chamber**

**Questions?**

**Reach out to Kat DeSantis**

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