

News you can use about elections. From League of Women Voters NH. **Sept. 2, 2026**

It's almost here. Yes, the end of summer, with Labor Day next Monday. But also, finally, the **New Hampshire primary**, the day after Labor Day.

This is the last year the primary will be in September. Starting in 2028, the NH primary for federal, state, and county offices will be held in June (new law passed this spring by the NH Legislature, takes effect in 2028).

Tuesday, September 8 primary: news you can share with friends and neighbors. Be a **voting ambassador**; help others understand what they need to do to make their voices heard.

Your vote is your voice. Voting matters. Every vote is counted. The primary determines who will be on your November ballot.

Most important message: bring a photo ID when you go to the polls. You will not be given a ballot without proof of identity. Most common is a **driver's license**, from NH or any other state where you recently lived. **Passport or passcard** works too. If you are over 65 and your driver's license or passport is out of date, no worry. They are still legal for identifying you for voting.

If you don't have a license or passport, it is possible to get a non-driver ID at the DMV. Not much time left to do that for the primary, but you could be the good neighbor who helps an older or disabled person get this done before the November election.

If you are a ballot worker, Thank You! For the rest of us, we will be kind to poll workers. **Have your ID handy to show to the ballot clerk.** Most cities now have electronic poll books that will scan your license, find you on the voting list, and save everybody time. Easy peasy.

Reminder that **primaries are party-based**. You will get either a Democratic or a Republican ballot. Only candidates of that party are on the ballot. For "undeclared" or "independent" voters, yes, you may vote in a primary. But you must choose which party's ballot you want. After you have voted, you may stop at a special table to return your status to "undeclared." If you don't you'll be considered a member of the party you voted in.

Not to worry if you forget to do that. You can stop at your town clerk's office anytime after the election to make the switch back. Just be sure to do it at least 3 months before the next primary, which will be the presidential primary in early 2028. Otherwise you are locked in to that party for the primary.

Ignore this paragraph if you know it. But we do get questions and maybe you can help neighbors new to the process. **The November 3 ballot will have candidates of both parties, those who won in their primaries.** It may also have some Independent or other third party candidates who qualified in a different way. **On November 3 all voters get the same ballot** as other voters in their town or ward. You can choose any individuals to vote for. You don't have to vote for only Democrats or only Republicans on November 3.

FAQs: Do I have to vote for every office on the ballot? I don't know who they are. Common question, and the easy answer is No, you don't have to vote for every office. Your ballot will still be counted and tallied for the offices you did vote for.

What if I mess up my ballot? Can I just X out the mark I don't want and fill in another candidate's oval? No, especially in a city or town that uses ballot counting machines. The machines will think you voted for two people for the same office and will discard both votes for that office. Ask for a new ballot if you mess one up. Trade the ruined ballot for the new one and try again.

Can I write in a candidate? Yes. It's a waste of everyone's time (when ballots are tallied at the end of the day) if you write in Mickey Mouse. But if you have a serious choice you may print the name and fill in the oval beside it.

How do I find out more about the candidates? First, get a sample ballot, cup of coffee, and start googling. You can type in a candidate's name and NH and probably find their campaign website and maybe articles about them. You can also go to CitizensCount.org which is a NH-specific non-partisan source. Another is BallotReady.org. Takes time, but many of the candidates will be on there. Sample ballots for each town are available to download at the Sec of State's webpage:
<https://www.sos.nh.gov/elections/sample-ballots>

What if someone isn't yet registered to vote? NH allows people to register on election day at their own polling place. A person needs to prove **age, citizenship, identity, and domicile** (meaning where you live.) Think of it as ACID test documents needed. Details of how to prove these are on the [LWVNH.org website](http://LWVNH.org). Usually we suggest doing this before election day at your town clerk's office, but it is too late for the primary; do it on Sept. 8 at the polls, or wait until later this fall and go to your town/city clerk with your paperwork.

How do I know my ballot will be counted? Paper ballots are used in all NH elections, easily accessed for audits and recounts when needed. Ballot counting machines (which are not computers – they are not hooked up to the internet) are used in many towns and all cities. But any voter may request their ballot be counted by hand. Just hand it to the moderator and say so, instead of putting it in the machine.

If you are getting this email, you are either a past or present League of Women Voters member or at some point you signed up for our legislative alerts. As with any bulk mail, you may “unsubscribe” at any time by scrolling to the end and clicking “unsubscribe.” *Please, if you are a **member**, don't do that as we then lose contact with you.* But others who feel this is not for them, you may unsubscribe. No hard feelings.

*If you've been listening to the news lately, you've heard about a **federal executive order about ballots that are mailed in**. No matter what, we are so close to the Sept. 8 primary that no absentee ballots for this election will be affected. But here are some points from the **League of Women Voters US** to keep in mind about the November election (with slight tweaks to reflect NH laws):*

Make your voting plan early. There are ongoing legal challenges involving new federal requirements for mail voting, and the rules may change as those cases move through the courts. The League of Women Voters is closely monitoring these developments.

For now, voters who need to vote absentee should take these steps:

1. Know your state's rules.

Check with your state or local election official for the latest information about registering, requesting a mail ballot, voting in person, and election deadlines.

2. If you receive a mail ballot, return it as early as practicable.

Don't wait until the last minute. Follow your state's instructions carefully and allow enough time for your ballot to be received and processed. (In **NH**, all

absentee ballots must be received by 5 pm on Election Day. Postmark date is irrelevant.)

3. If you requested a ballot and don't receive it, act promptly.

Check your ballot status and contact your own town/city clerk to learn what options are available to you. Do not assume that you have to give up on voting. Under federal law, you can always vote in-person or vote using an absentee ballot in-person at your own town/city clerk's office up to 5 pm the day before the election.

4. Get reliable, current information.

Election rules vary by state and may change as litigation continues. Use your state and local election officials for the most current instructions. (And check the LWVNH.org website, which we'll update in real time if things change.)

Bottom line: Legal and administrative changes should not prevent any voter from making a voting plan. Voters should know their options, act early, and seek help if a requested ballot does not arrive.