



Massachusetts

- **Chief election official:** Secretary of the Commonwealth
- **Who runs elections locally:** City Clerks, Town Clerks, Registrars and Election Commissioners
- **Number of jurisdictions:** 351
- **State website:** www.sec.state.ma.us/divisions/elections/elections-and-voting.htm

ELECTION POLICY	STATUS	NATIONAL COMPARISON
VOTER REGISTRATION		
Online voter registration	OVR permitted	42 states and D.C. have online voter registration
Automatic/automated voter registration	AVR permitted	24 states and D.C. have automatic voter registration
Type of state voter registration database	Top-down	36 states and D.C. use top-down; six states use bottom-up; eight states use a hybrid system
Pre-registration	16 and 17-year-olds may preregister	22 states and D.C. permit pre-registration for 16- and 17-year-olds
Election Day/same-day registration	Permitted during early voting	24 states and D.C. have same-day registration
Registration deadline	10 days before Election Day	National average is 19 days before Election Day
VOTING		
Voter ID for in-person voting	ID not required if presented at the time of registration*	36 states require ID to vote in person
Early in-person voting	17 days before Election Day**	47 states and D.C. allow early in-person voting; national average is 22 days
Vote centers for Election Day voting	Not used	19 states and D.C. allow vote centers for Election Day voting
No-excuse absentee voting	Permitted	36 states permit no-excuse absentee voting
Mails ballots to all registered voters (aka “mostly mail elections”)	Ballots are not mailed to all registered voters	Eight states and D.C. mail ballots to all registered voters
Deadline for absentee/mail ballot return	5 p.m. on the 3 rd day after the election***	32 states require ballots returned by Election Day
Laws governing who can return a voted ballot	Voter’s family member	38 states have laws governing ballot collection
Ballot drop boxes	Permitted	12 states prohibit; 28 states permit; other states are silent
Ballot cure process	Ballot cure process offered statewide	33 states and D.C. have a ballot cure process
When absentee/mail ballot processing begins	Upon receipt	43 states and D.C. begin processing before Election Day
Electronic ballot return	Permitted for UOCAVA voters and voters who cannot mark a paper ballot	31 states and D.C. allow for military and overseas voters; 13 states and D.C. allow for voters with disabilities
OTHER		
Automatic recount threshold	Automatic recount threshold not used	24 states and D.C. have automatic recount thresholds
Post-election tabulation audits	Uses post-election audits only after presidential elections	49 states and D.C. require post-election audits
State primary type	Open to unaffiliated voters	Primaries range from fully open to fully closed

* ID required for first-time voters and voters who cannot be verified by HAVA.

** EIPV dates are different for primaries.

***Ballots must be postmarked by Election Day for biennial state elections. Ballots must be received by the close of polls for primary and municipal elections.

Note: Neither NCSL nor the U.S. Election Assistance Commission advocate for or against any election policies.

For more information, contact NCSL at elections-info@ncsl.org or 303-364-7700. For information on federal grants see www.eac.gov/grants.



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Use this QR code to access links to the EAC's election resources.

