



In 2022 a number of bills passed through the New Jersey State Legislature changing aspects of election law in the state. Below is a summary of these changes.

A3817 Top Line Changes:

- Requires **privacy sleeves** or **folders** for paper ballots and **privacy screens** or swinging for voting booths, and provisional ballot voting areas.
- Requires **early votes** and **mail-in votes** to be tallied in the election district where the voter resides. Additionally, whenever this provision would result in the secrecy of a voter's ballot being violated, election results will be reported in a manner that maintains the privacy of the voter. Reports from individual districts where a voter's ballot might be revealed are not subject to the open public records act.
- Allows registered voters to declare or change their **party affiliation** using the **online** voter registration form.
- Starting in 2026, voters will be able to apply for a **mail-in ballot** when completing an **online** voter registration form.
- The Secretary of State will develop an **online** form by July 28, 2023 to allow a registered voter to complete a **change of residence notice, change of name notice**. The commissioners of registration in the appropriate counties will update their voter records and notify the voter by mail that they are now registered to vote in the voters' new county of residence.

A3819 Top Line Changes:

- Voters will be **removed from permanent Vote by Mail status** after a voter opted in if the voter does **not vote by mail for four consecutive years** beginning with the 2020 election cycle. The voter will no longer automatically receive a mail-in ballot after four consecutive years of not voting by mail. Voters that are on the permanent list will otherwise continue to be sent a mail-in ballot for every election unless they notify the County Clerk's office in writing that they no longer wish to receive mail ballots. Voters can check their voting status by creating and logging into their [Voter Record here](#) through the New Jersey Voter Information Portal.
- If a voter requests to receive a mail-in ballot at an address other than their primary address, and the ballot is **returned or marked undeliverable for two consecutive** general elections, then future mail-in ballots will be mailed to the voter's address where they are registered to vote and the voter will be notified in writing of the change.

A3820 Top Line Changes:

- **Unaffiliated voters** on the **permanent vote-by mail** list shall **no longer** be sent mail-in ballots for **primary elections**. These unaffiliated voters will receive a political party declaration form and

information about how to affiliate with a political party and how to vote in person. Unaffiliated voters on the permanent vote-by mail list can declare a party by filling out the Party Declaration Form by the deadline, or by voting in-person on Election Day or during early voting and declaring a party at the polls.

A3822 Top Line Changes:

- Allows county board of elections to begin **pre-canvassing mail-in ballots five days** before the election. This includes opening the inner envelopes for each mail-in ballot and canvassing each mail-in ballot but not tallying results. The contents of the mail-in ballots and the results of the ballot canvassing will remain confidential, and disclosure of results prior to the time designated by law is a third-degree misdemeanor. The canvassing will be conducted in a manner such that no individual will obtain knowledge of unofficial election results.
- Requires that **ballots** will be ready for **printing 45 days prior** to primary and general elections, instead of 50 days prior to the general, and it changes the deadline for mailing ballots from the 45th day to the 38th day prior to an election. These deadlines will do nothing to interfere with compliance with delivering overseas and military ballots per federal law requirements.
- Changes petition deadlines for ballot qualification, **petitions will be due 71 days prior** to the primary election. Previous law deadline was 64 days. The clerk will certify the candidates on the ballot 61 days prior to the primary election (was 54).
- Allows county boards to establish a pick-up schedule for drop boxes, consistent with guidelines established by the secretary of state
- Provides that anyone who chooses to **update** an existing **voter registration at MVC**, the applicants shall be sent a confirmation notice by the commissioner of registration noting the change.

A3823 Top Line Changes:

- Requires the health officer or custodian of death records for a municipality to **provide death records every two weeks** during the final two months prior to a primary or general, instead of providing these records monthly, as under prior law. Within the final two months prior to an election, the commissioner of registration must act on this list within 10 days, as opposed to within 30 days, as under prior law.
- **Instructional sessions for election district board** members may be conducted **remotely** by electronic means to any election board member who has completed the instructional session within the last four years. Remote session procedures must be reviewed and approved by the SOS once every two years.
- Exempts **election worker compensation** from income tax

Reach out to Philip Hensley, Democracy Policy Analyst, with questions: phensley@lwvnj.org