

Frequently Asked Questions about Michigan's February 28th Election and Presidential Primary

Q. I heard I have to declare a party preference in order to vote. Is that true?

A. Not exactly. However, in order to vote in the Republican or Democratic Presidential Primary, you must specify which party's ballot you are requesting prior to voting.

Q. Does that mean I will always be labeled as a supporter of one party or the other?

A. While not officially registering a voter by party, the record of which primary a voter chooses is part of the public record for a period of 22 months.

Q. Why is this election different?

A. Technically, this is called a Presidential Preference Primary, and it is really a partisan function in a way other elections are not. Some states, like Iowa, hold caucuses to determine how many delegates a candidate for President wins from that state. Many other states have partisan registration when you register to vote. Since Michigan does not, and we have a "closed primary," local clerks are required to do it this way.

Q. What if I am voting Absentee?

A. Absentee voters must check a box indicating which ballot they are requesting on their absentee ballot application or they will not receive a ballot. That is the rule the Legislature has set up.

Q. Who will appear on the Presidential Primary ballot for each party?

A. The following Presidential primary candidates will be listed on the February 28th ballot. Candidates who have withdrawn from the race remain on the ballot because they withdrew after the deadline. The Democratic Party is holding a caucus on May 4th and will be honoring the results of that contest only.

Republican
Michelle Bachmann
Herman Cain

Democratic
Barack Obama
Uncommitted

Newt Gingrich
Jon Huntsman
Gary Johnson
Fred Karger
Ron Paul
Rick Perry
Buddy Roemer
Mitt Romney
Rick Santorum
Uncommitted

Q. What if I fill out my Absentee Ballot, and the candidate I vote for drops out between when I vote and the date of the primary? Is there anything I can do?

A. If you are an absentee voter and wish to change your vote, you can request your ballot be spoiled by your clerk and you may fill out a new one.

If you decide to switch which primary you wish to vote in, you must first surrender your ballot to your local clerk and they can reissue you a new ballot, or if you have already voted, you must request your ballot to be withdrawn.

If you have any other questions, please call:

Shelby Township Clerk's Office 586-731-5102

Macomb County Elections Office 586-469-5209

Michigan Department of State 517-373-2540