

## Checks and Balances in Texas: Important Dates for the 2024 November Election

Texas's elections are governed by a number of laws and regulations that ensure there are checks and balances throughout the process. Bipartisan teams of election workers at the local, county, and state level go through a meticulous list of steps to verify the count and check for accuracy.

Below we detail the dates each of these steps occur to offer greater transparency about the rigorous efforts underway to deliver a free and fair election in Texas. For greater detail about verifying mail ballot applications and ballots, as well as the post-election process, [please visit the rest of our series on checks and balances in Texas elections](#).

Importantly, this is nonpartisan educational research intended for 501(c)(3)-compliant purposes only. It is *not* to be used for any partisan, political, or electioneering activities by any organization.

### Voting by Mail

- [Saturday, September 21](#) - Counties must begin sending mail ballots to military and overseas (UOCAVA) voters with accepted applications.
- [Monday, October 7](#) - Counties must begin sending mail ballots to voters (other than military and overseas voters) with accepted applications.<sup>1</sup>
- [Friday, October 25](#) - Deadline for voters to request a mail ballot. Applications must be *received* by the appropriate early voting clerk by this date to be accepted.
- [Monday, October 28](#) - Counties must begin delivering mail ballots returned by voters to early voting ballot boards for processing and verification.
- [Friday, November 1](#) - Counties with populations over 100,000 may begin tabulating verified mail ballots. State law prohibits the publication of results until after polls close on Election Day.
- [Tuesday, November 5](#) - **Election Day** - Voters returning mail ballots must have them *postmarked* by this date.
- [Wednesday, November 6](#) - All mail ballots *postmarked by November 5* must be received by the clerk by 5 p.m. to be eligible to be counted.

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<sup>1</sup> The deadline for mailing ballots to voters with accepted applications is 30 days before Election Day. As that day falls on a Sunday, state law provides that a mailing on the next business day is considered timely. Tex. Elec. Code §1.006.

- [Monday, November 11](#) - Carrier envelope cure deadline for voters to provide election officials missing information on mail ballot carrier envelopes.<sup>2</sup>

## In-Person Voting (Early & Election Day)

- [Monday, October 7](#) - Voter registration deadline. All in-person applications must be completed and all mail applications must be *postmarked* by this date.
- [Monday, October 21](#) - In-person early voting begins in all counties.
- [Saturday, October 26](#) - Counties must offer in-person early voting for at least 12 hours. Voting may not be conducted earlier than 6 a.m. or later than 10 p.m.
- [Sunday, October 27](#) - Counties must offer in-person early voting for at least six hours. Voting may not be conducted earlier than 9 a.m. or later than 10 p.m.
- [Monday, October 28](#) - Counties must begin offering at least 12 hours of in-person early voting each day until the end of the early voting period. Voting may not be conducted earlier than 6 a.m. or later than 10 p.m.
- [Friday, November 1](#) - Last day of the in-person early voting period. Early voting will generally end at 7 p.m.
- [Tuesday, November 5](#) - **Election Day.**
  - **7 a.m.** - Polling locations open.
  - **7 p.m.** - Polling locations close. All voters still in line must be allowed to vote. Voters returning mail ballots to their clerk's office must do so by this time.

## Counting, Canvassing, & Certification

- [Friday, November 1](#) - Counties with populations over 100,000 may begin tabulating verified mail ballots. State law prohibits the publication of results until after polls close on Election Day.
- [Tuesday, November 5](#) - **Election Day.**
  - **7 a.m.** - Counties tabulating ballots at a central counting location may begin processing ballots once polls open if the authority conducting the election has adopted a rule or resolution allowing early processing.
  - **8 a.m.** - Polling locations may begin counting ballots if at least 10 votes have been cast. State law prohibits the publication of results until polls close.
  - **After polls close** - Polling and central counting locations must count ballots continuously until the count is complete.
- [Wednesday, November 6](#)

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<sup>2</sup> "Curing" is the process by which a voter: 1) receives notice from election officials of a discrepancy on the mail ballot carrier envelope; and 2) has an opportunity to correct the issue and have the ballot counted. In Texas, a voter may have an opportunity to cure a carrier envelope if: 1) the voter failed to sign the envelope or provide an ID number, 2) election officials are unsure the voter's signature or ID number on the carrier envelope matches the information in the voter's registration record; or 3) the envelope is missing a statement of residency or information about a witness (when required by law).

- **2 a.m.** - If a polling location will be unable to complete its count by this time, the presiding judge must notify the custodian of election records of the total number of votes cast, the incomplete count as of the time of notification, and the expected time of finishing the count.
- **7 p.m.** - All precinct results must be delivered to the custodian of election records by this time.
- **[Friday, November 8](#)** - Election officials must begin a partial manual count of ballots counted by automatic tabulation equipment to verify the accuracy of the count.
- **[Friday, November 8](#)** - Counties may begin the canvassing process.<sup>3</sup>
- **[Monday, November 18](#)** - Deadline for verification and counting of provisional ballots.
- **[Tuesday, November 19](#)** - Deadline for completion of the county canvass.
- **[Wednesday, November 20 \(or 24 hours after completion of the county canvass\)](#)**- Certified county results must be delivered to the secretary of state.<sup>4</sup>
- **[Saturday, November 23](#)** - The governor and secretary of state may begin the state canvass. The governor will oversee the canvass of federal, state, and multi county offices.
- **[Tuesday, November 26](#)** - Deadline for county election officials to complete the partial manual count of ballots counted by automatic tabulation equipment to verify the accuracy of the count.
- **[Sunday, December 8](#)** - Deadline for the governor and secretary of state to complete the state canvass. The governor will certify the results of all offices covered by the state canvass immediately following the conclusion of the canvass.
- **[Wednesday, December 11](#)** - Deadline for the governor to issue a certification of ascertainment of the state's presidential electors for the certification to be treated as conclusive at the January 6 joint session of Congress to certify the presidential election.
- **[Tuesday, December 17](#)** - Presidential electors meet at the state capitol to cast their votes.

## Recounts & Election Contests

- **[Wednesday, November 20](#)** - Deadline for election records to be made publicly available.

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<sup>3</sup> “Canvassing” is the process by which the appropriate authority checks the results from each voting location and ballot counting location for accuracy and compliance with statutory procedures. After these checks, the results from each location are compiled to create results for each race on the ballot. In Texas, the county canvass is typically conducted by the county commissioners’ court. The state canvass is conducted by the Governor with the support of the Secretary of State.

<sup>4</sup> “Certification” is the process by which winners in elections are officially declared following the completion of the canvass. For local races that can be determined following the county canvass, certification will occur after the county canvass. For federal, state, and multicounty races that must be determined by the state canvass, certification will generally occur immediately following the completion of the state canvass.

- **[Friday, November 22](#) (or three days after completion of the county canvass) -** Petitions requesting recounts of offices determined by a county canvass must be filed by 5 p.m. Races for which the canvass shows a tied vote will be recounted automatically.
- **[Wednesday, November 27](#) (or seven days after election records are publicly available) -** Deadline for filing election contests for state legislative offices.
- **[Friday, November 29](#) -** Recounts must begin within seven days of the approval of the requesting petition, or on the day after ballots are delivered to the custodian of election records, whichever is later.
- **[Saturday, November 30](#) (or 10 days after election records are publicly available) -** Deadline for filing election contests for the presidential election. The governor will investigate and decide these contests.
- **[Wednesday, December 11](#) -** Petitions requesting recounts of offices determined by the state canvass must be filed by 5 p.m. Races for which the canvass shows a tied vote will be recounted automatically.
- **[Wednesday, December 18](#) -** Recounts for offices determined by the state canvass must begin within 7 days of the approval of the requesting petition, or on the day after ballots are delivered to the custodian of election records, whichever is later.

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