

What Happens Now that a Presumptive Nominee has Dropped Out?

Some groups and individuals sought to use the news that President Biden declined to seek re-election to cause confusion around the election process and when voters might get their ballots. Election administrators have and will continue to adapt to changing dynamics to ensure that the process is secure, accessible, and complies with the law. This document outlines how they will ensure that your ballot is accurate and on time and describes challenges that may be thrown their way.

Process: Democratic Party Side

- ▶ Two options: either a virtual roll call vote (before convention) that confirms a nominee **OR** an open convention where the nominee is selected by Thursday Aug 22, 2024.
- ▶ Likely on or before August 21, the Presidential pick will announce their VP (traditionally, the VP speaks on August 21st in the evening).
- ▶ By August 23, the party will inform election administrators of their nominee & VP.
- ▶ *Note: The Republican party has already nominated Donald Trump, and third parties have unique processes to secure nomination.*



Questions?
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Process: Election Official Side

- ▶ On or before August 23, election officials will be informed by the Democratic Party of their nominee & VP via a National Party Certification of Nomination.
- ▶ Each state has their own ballot certification deadlines - the earliest state to certify their ballot is Washington State, whose certification deadline is August 20.

NOTE: In the event that there is a contested convention, states like Washington have requested a provisional certification of nomination by August 20, and an official certification of nomination by August 23. These states will then finalize that ballot line item on the 23rd.
- ▶ Once the state election offices receive all of the national party notifications, they will compile a list and share it with the local offices.
- ▶ Before the deadline for absentee ballots to be mailed, election offices will go through a [ballot proofing process](#) to ensure that there are no errors in their ballot design. This is particularly important because both the top of the ticket and down ballot races may change prior to certification depending on third party processes, for example.
- ▶ Then - they will conduct [Logic and Accuracy testing](#) to ensure that the system accurately tabulates ballots and reports results.
- ▶ The ballot will then be finalized and printed. This means that nothing on the ballot will be changed between then and the general election unless there is an unusual circumstance.
- ▶ After that, a traditional general election will be run as normal.

Glossary of Terms:

- ▶ **National Party Certification of Nomination** - This is an official document generated by parties and shared with election officials that outlines their nominee.
- ▶ **Ballot Proofing** - This is the process of ensuring that there are no errors on the ballot, and that it is reflective of all of the candidates and issues that are eligible to be voted on or for.
- ▶ **Logic & Accuracy Testing** - This is the process of ensuring that all of the information in election systems matches what is on the ballot, etc. so that the systems can properly tabulate results.

What may impact deadlines:

Litigation Risks: [Some groups](#) have committed to aggressively litigating the nomination process, leaving election officials waiting on legal guidance which condenses their timelines and increases pressure on their offices.

Note - while election administrators have some flexibility over August and September, pressure increases significantly within 45 days of Election Day (September 21).

Down-ballot Complication: Any extension to ballot certification will apply to all races, not just the top of the ticket. This means that it could lead to changes on lower-level races as well as ballot measures up until the final moment, which means that ballot proofing before printing is all the more critical.

Printing delays: Election officials will all be waiting until August 23rd at the earliest (unless parties certify their nominees sooner) to print their ballots, so national printing vendors will receive a large volume of printing requests on a very short (2 week) timeline. They will need to be prepared to respond to this scale of requests.

Proactive Communications Needs: election administrators may need to extend deadlines for absentee ballot requests or inform the public of delays. They may need additional resources to send out informative mailers, and will need to update bulletins in offices as well as online. They may also need support in communicating with the public about these changes.