



## Party Affiliation & Primary Elections in Florida

As a voter, how does party affiliation affect the ballot I get in a Primary Election? Florida is a “closed primary state.” This means that the Primary Elections in Florida are held so that the political parties, such as the Democrats or Republicans—or even the Green Party—may nominate their candidates for the General Election. The winner of each party’s Primary Election goes on to the General Election to face the nominees from other parties or any candidates who are running under no party affiliation.

In a closed Primary Election, Democratic voters vote for Democratic candidates, Republican voters vote for Republican candidates, and members of other parties vote for their parties’ candidates.

### But ... there are a couple of exceptions!

**1** *If all candidates for an office have the same party affiliation and the winner won’t have any opposition in the General Election, then all voters of all parties may vote in the Primary Election for that office. This is called a “Universal Primary Contest.”*

**2** *All voters may vote for nonpartisan offices, such as judicial and school board members, and issues (like local ballot measures/referenda) that are on the Primary Election ballot.*

If I am registered under “No Party Affiliation,” will I get to vote in the Primary Election? Voters who are registered under “No Party Affiliation” (and those voters who are registered with minor parties that don’t have candidates in the Primary Election) may vote for Universal Primary Contests, nonpartisan offices, such as judicial and school board members, and issues (like local county or city issues/referenda) in the Primary Election.

How often may I change my party affiliation? If you are not a candidate running for office, you may change your party affiliation as often as you want, up until 29 days before an election. The voter registration books close 29 days before each election, so no party changes or new registrations can be accepted while the books are closed. Your party affiliation at the time of book closing will be your party affiliation on Election Day.

How can I change my political party affiliation? The ONLY way you can change your political party affiliation is to fill out a “Florida Voter Registration Application” and check the “party change” box (or by changing your party affiliation on the voter registration application at the driver license office). Then mail or deliver the application to the Baker County Supervisor of Elections Office at least 29 days before an election.

(Applications that are postmarked before the deadline will be accepted, and changes that are made in the driver license office before the deadline will also be accepted.) If you wait longer than that, you won’t be able to change your party until AFTER the election.

Because Florida law requires party changes to be made ON the “Florida Voter Registration Application” and with your original signature, we cannot change your party over the telephone or accept your application by fax.

Chris Milton, Supervisor of Elections