



Elections and Redistricting

During the 2020 legislative session, the General Assembly considered a number of measures related to elections, including bills addressing ballot access by candidates, ballot measures, local elections, and voting. Several redistricting bills were also considered in anticipation of the 2021 redistricting cycle.

Ballot Access by Candidates

House Bill 20-1289 aligns certain eligibility deadlines for precinct caucuses, part of the ballot access process for major party candidates. Under the bill, candidates for precinct committee person must be a precinct resident and affiliated with the political party for 22 days prior to the caucus date. Electors who turned 18 years old or who became naturalized citizens during the 22 days prior to a precinct caucus may still be a precinct committee person candidate despite not meeting this requirement.

House Bill 20-1359 addresses candidates' ability to get on the ballot in pandemic conditions. It extends various 2020 deadlines related to ballot access requirements, including for party and county assemblies, certificate of designation filings, and ballot certification by the Secretary of State. The bill also provides additional flexibility for political party procedures due to public health concerns. All provisions in the bill are repealed on December 31, 2020.

Ballot Measures

Senate Bill 20-209 addresses the effective date of bills with petition clauses enacted in 2020. These bills had the assumed date of August 5, 2020, listed in the petition clause, but under the bill, the date is extended to 90 days after adjournment sine die, unless a later date is specified. If a referendum petition is filed against a bill, it will be brought before the people at the November 2022 general election.

House Bill 20-1376 delays the ballot measure concerning transportation revenue anticipation notes authorized under Senate Bills 18-001 and 19-263 until the November 2021 general election. It also adjusts transportation-related transfers and expenditures accordingly.

Under *House Bill 20-1416*, Legislative Council Staff will only prepare fiscal impact statements for citizen initiatives that have a title set and an approved petition for circulation. Previously, these statements were prepared for each initial hearing before the Title Board.

Local Elections

House Bill 20-1156 makes various minor changes to the Municipal Election Code. These modifications include changing filing deadlines for candidate nominating petitions, eliminating ballot stub and duplicate stub requirements for mail ballots, changing the self-affirmation on the mail ballot return envelopes, and adding an alternative affirmation for military and overseas voters.

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House Bill 20-1132 modifies the criteria for Local Elections Assistance Cash Fund grants by expanding eligible election equipment and supplies, and allowing grants for leasing election equipment as well as purchasing.

House Bill 20-1026 creates a new 23rd Judicial District beginning in 2025. At the November 2024 general election, Arapahoe County alone will elect a new district attorney for the 18th Judicial District, and Douglas, Elbert, and Lincoln counties will elect a new district attorney for the 23rd Judicial District.

The General Assembly also considered, but did not pass, *House Bill 20-1066*, which would have set contribution limits for school district director candidates.

Voting

House Bill 20-1313 establishes requirements for election administration towards the end of the voting period. These requirements include:

- From the 15th through the 8th day before an election, county clerks must process voter registration applications or changes that require a new ballot within two business days.
- Beginning the 15th day before an election, county clerks must deliver original or replacement ballots to the United States Postal Service (USPS) within two business days after processing a voter registration application or update.
- Within 11 days of an election all ballots must be mailed by first class mail.
- If an elector requests a new ballot or registers at least eight days prior to an election, county clerks must mail a ballot or replacement ballot to that elector. County clerks must also maintain a record of each ballot sent pursuant to these requirements.
- Any county clerk who receives information from the USPS or any third party indicating that ballots have been lost, stolen, or will not be timely delivered must report the issue to the Secretary of State.

- Any person responsible for preparing, issuing, transporting, or mailing ballots (but who is not employed by a county clerk or the USPS) has a duty to report to the county clerk any issues resulting in the loss, theft, or delay of the ballots under their care.

House Bill 20-1081, which was postponed indefinitely, would have increased access to multilingual ballots for voters and required the Department of State to offer additional translation services. *House Bill 20-1149*, which was deemed lost, would have allowed 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in school district elections.

Redistricting

After Amendments Y and Z in 2018 created the Colorado Independent Congressional and Legislative Redistricting Commissions, the General Assembly passed legislation in 2020 to enable the commissions to do their work. *Senate Bill 20-186* conforms state law with the constitutional provisions of Amendments Y and Z and directs Legislative Council Staff and the Office of Legislative Legal Services to assign individuals to staff the redistricting commissions. The bill also creates new accounts in the Legislative Cash Fund for congressional and legislative redistricting, and transfers \$1 million from the cash fund to each account for the commissions' work.

House Bill 20-1010 requires the Department of Corrections (DOC) to collect and maintain an electronic record of the legal residence, race, and age for all persons entering its custody. The bill directs DOC to deliver this data to the General Assembly's nonpartisan staff for use in the redistricting process. When an inmate's legal residence is known, staff is required to reassign that person to the known address instead of using the correctional facility's address. When an inmate's legal residence is unknown or their last known address is outside Colorado, the prisoner is counted at the correctional facility.

House Bill 20-1073, which was deemed lost, would have created independent redistricting commissions for county commissioner seats in certain counties.