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Bangor

Everything you need to know for Election Day in Maine

by **Paul Koenig**
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A voter marks a ballot at the polling station in Kennebunk, March 5. Credit: Michael Dwyer / AP

On Tuesday, Mainers will vote for a new president, their congressional representative and a U.S. senator, state legislators and five referendums, as well as local races.

This is everything you need to know to be ready to vote and track the results.

When are polls open?

Polls are generally open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesday. Many open earlier, while smaller towns open them as late as 10 a.m. You can [look up opening times](#) on the secretary of state's website. If polls close while you're still in line, you're still able to vote.

Where is my polling place?

Polling places are typically in municipal offices, schools or other public buildings. You can call your municipal office or use the state's online tool to [find your polling place](#).

Can I register to vote at the polls?

Yes. Maine is one of 21 states that allows same-day registration. Just bring identification and proof of residency to your polling place to register and vote. You do not need identification to vote, only to register. You can check your voter registration status by entering your name, date of birth and current address on [Vote.org](https://www.vote.org).

Is it too late to drop off my absentee ballot?

No, it's not too late. All ballots will be counted as long as they are returned to your city or town clerk by 8 p.m. Tuesday.

If you recently mailed in your ballot, [check the state's lookup tool](#) to ensure your local clerk has received it. If not, you can vote in person and your absentee ballot will be voided.

How do I find more information out about candidates and the referendums?

You can learn about all of the candidates and where they stand on the biggest issues by reading the [Bangor Daily News voter guide](#). We distilled the historic and stated positions of statewide candidates and put questions to every candidate for Maine's state legislative seats and printed their responses verbatim. Plus, we explained what the five statewide referendum questions mean.

What do the latest polls say?

A [poll released Friday](#) showed U.S. Rep. Jared Golden, a Democrat from the 2nd District, leading his Republican challenger, state Rep. Austin Theriault of Fort Kent, 53 percent to 41 percent. But that poll, from SurveyUSA and commissioned by the electoral reform group FairVote and the BDN, differed from other recent ones, which had [Theriault slightly ahead of Golden](#).

Friday's poll found former President Donald Trump leading Vice President Kamala Harris, 49 percent to 44 percent, in the 2nd District. Trump won the more rural, northern district in 2016 and 2020. However, Harris is projected to win in the more liberal 1st District and statewide, which would give her three of Maine's four electoral votes.

That same poll found support for Question 5, which would change Maine's flag to one with a pine tree and star, falling dramatically from an earlier survey, with 52 percent of voters opposed to the change, 33 percent in support and 15 percent undecided.

What will ranked-choice voting be used for?

While Maine uses ranked-choice voting in statewide primaries, it's only used for federal offices in general elections, like on Tuesday. That means you'll only be asked to rank your choices when voting for president, U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate. You can learn more about [how ranked-choice voting works here](#).

How are Maine's results tallied on election night?

In Maine, media outlets like the BDN collect results from cities and towns and project outcomes. All results reported on Tuesday night will be unofficial. Media outlets obtain these unofficial results directly from cities and towns, which have two days to send final results to the secretary of state's office for certification. Only then are the results official.

The BDN and the Associated Press are the only media outlets in Maine that gather statewide results from clerks independently. Because of that, our results will often look different than those of other Maine outlets as we put cities and towns into our systems at different times. The BDN reports races down to the local level across the state.

The AP and other organizations — including the BDN's partner, Decision Desk HQ — use those results to typically project a winner before the unofficial count is complete. These outlets employ statisticians who

consider a range of factors before making a final projection when they are nearly certain that a result will not change. BDN editors sign off before they are made public.

When will results come in?

We will start listing results after the polls close at 8 p.m. Keep an eye on our [election results page](#) and follow our live blog.



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