

NEWS RELEASE

Released by: William M. Gardner, Secretary of State
Gordon J. MacDonald, Attorney General

June 5, 2018 deadline for Changing Party Affiliation for voting in the September 11, 2018 State Primary

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Immediate

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Secretary of State William M. Gardner and Attorney General Gordon J. MacDonald remind voters that June 5, 2018, is the deadline for a voter to change party affiliation or to become unaffiliated with a party for voting in the September 11, 2018, State Primary Election. Generally, voters are affiliated with a political party when they previously chose to vote in a political party's primary or when they affiliate with a party while registering to vote. Unless the voter changes his or her political party affiliation after voting and before the next primary, the voter is limited by law to voting on the ballot of the political party he or she is affiliated with. By contrast, unaffiliated voters may choose to vote in either party's primary on Election Day. We are providing this guidance because Local Election Officials have in the past reported that during State Primary Elections some voters who are registered as affiliated with one political party seek to vote on the ballot of a different political party in a subsequent election, but are surprised when they cannot do so.

The attached Special Notice provides further information.

SPECIAL NOTICE

Tuesday June 5th is the deadline for changing your political party affiliation before the September 11, 2018 State Primary Election.

New Hampshire will hold a Primary Election on Tuesday September 11, 2018. Voters at a Primary Election vote by official ballot to nominate their party's candidates for federal, state, and county offices. Republicans also elect delegates to the state party convention.

At a Primary Election a voter may only vote in one party's primary. A voter who is registered as affiliated with a specific party may only vote on that party's ballot at the Primary Election. A voter is registered as affiliated with a political party if:

- He or she indicates they are affiliated with that party on the voter registration form when registering to vote and have not changed party affiliation; or
- He or she, if previously registered with no party affiliation (undeclared), chooses to vote in a state or presidential primary and then does not change his or her registration back to undeclared.

An undeclared voter may vote in a party primary by choosing that party at the polling place. Only voters who enter the polling place as undeclared on Primary Election day may choose to change back to undeclared at the polling place after voting on Primary day. Voters who are affiliated with a party may change affiliation or to undeclared on or before June 5, 2018 or after the state Primary Election day.

Voters should verify that they are either registered as affiliated with the political party in whose primary they plan to vote on September 11, 2018 or that they are registered as undeclared.

You can verify your voter registration through the Secretary of State's Voter Information Look-up web site: <http://sos.nh.gov/> (Click on the Voter Information Look-up link) or <http://sos.nh.gov/VoteInforLook.aspx> to go directly to the Voter Information Look-up page.

It is important to verify your current voter registration status. At each Primary Election voters seek to vote on the ballot of a party other than the party they are affiliated with and the law does not permit them to do so. Many of these voters were at one time registered as undeclared, voted in a state or presidential primary which affiliates the voter with the political party whose ballot they chose, and the voter did not change back to being undeclared.

If you would like to change your party affiliation you may:

- Complete a change of party affiliation form at your town or city Clerk's office no later than Tuesday June 5, 2018 (RSA 654:34-a); or
- Attend the session of the Supervisors of the Checklist for your town on Tuesday June 5, 2018, between 7:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. and change your affiliation with the Supervisors. RSA 654:32. RSA 654:34.

If on primary election day you are registered as affiliated with a political party:

- **You will not be able to change your affiliation on primary election day and vote on primary election day; or**
- **Vote on the primary ballot of a different political party.**