



What is a Primary Election?

How do primary elections work, and how do voters in Illinois cast their ballots? These resources explore the operation of primary elections and key information for Illinois voters.

Key Definitions (from USA.gov)

- **Primary election** – An election held to choose which of a party’s candidates will be nominated for the general election.
- **Open primary** – In an open primary, all voters can vote for any candidate they prefer, regardless of the voter’s or candidate’s party affiliation.
- **Closed primary** – In a closed primary, voters can only vote for a candidate from the party that the voter belongs to.
- **Caucus** – A meeting held by members of a party to decide an issue. Members of a party choose a candidate to support or they elect members to a state nominating committee.

Explore Primary Elections

“Who Will Win the 2020 Democratic Nomination?” from *FiveThirtyEight*

<https://53eig.ht/2uESbsH>

This site explores the potential Democratic primary outcomes with a range of interactive charts and tools.

“How the New Primary Calendar Changes the Contest for Democrats” by Nate Cohn in *The New York Times*

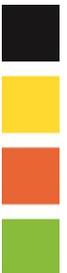
<https://nyti.ms/2FAfTCe>

This article investigates the impact of the 2020 primary and caucus calendar on the Democratic primary process as well as individual candidates.

“Open Primaries, Closed Primaries, and Blanket Primaries” from *Khan Academy*

<https://bit.ly/2NgXfdf>

This video explains the operations of primary elections.





“Too Much Democracy Is Bad for Democracy” by Jonathan Rauch and Ray La Raja in *The Atlantic*

<https://bit.ly/308bKFv>

This article provides a critical perspective on the U.S. primary election process and how it impacts our politics.

General Voter Resources

League of Women Voters of Evanston

<https://www.lwve.org/>

This non-partisan organization is dedicated to voter and citizen education with the belief that informed citizens are the key to effective government.

Cook County Clerk’s Office Election Information

<https://www.cookcountyclerk.com/agency/elections>

Complete online voter registration, find your polling place, and see candidates and important dates for upcoming elections.

Chicago Tribune 2020 Election Coverage

<https://www.chicagotribune.com/politics/elections/>

Peruse the *Tribune*'s 2020 election content, including candidate biographies, coverage of Democratic candidates and Republican challengers, and important dates.

Key Dates for the 2020 Illinois Primary

- **February 18, 2020** – Last day for registration or transfer of registration within the offices of the election authority before the Presidential Primary Election
- **March 1, 2020** – Last day for voters to register to vote through the State Board of Elections website
- **March 17, 2020** – Presidential Primary Election

