



## **Presidential Primary Surprise**

Though we are deep into the holiday season, voters not registered with any political party (No Party Preference - NPP) are receiving a jarring reminder of how swiftly the next election is approaching.

Among the gift catalogs and holiday cards in the mailbox, they are finding a notice from their county elections office notifying them of their options for participating in the Presidential Primary.

These notices are creating confusion and even indignation in some voters.

### **There's a reason Californians are confused when faced with the every-four-years Presidential Primary.**

Since 2014 in California, all non-presidential primary elections have been open rather than partisan, and **the top two in each race become the "finalists"** for the General Election.

### **The moment California instituted this Top Two "Jungle" Primary was the moment California ceased to operate as a Republic.**

Since that time, members of all parties other than the two major parties are guaranteed to be disenfranchised in the General Election.

**In a true Primary**, each party selects its choice of nominee for all races, and all parties' choices are represented on the General Election ballot. That preserves the very vital feature of a Republic, to protect the minority from the tyranny of the majority.

But in California, **the top two process eliminates candidates from the minor parties** (the tyranny of the majority at work). The result is the General Election ballot gives voters a choice in each nonpresidential race between two Democrats, two Republicans or one of each.

**That is NOT how a Republic should work.**

**BUT...**

**A Presidential Primary is not a normal election!**

**The rules are determined by the political parties because its purpose is to assist the parties in selecting their ultimate national candidate.**

Therefore, the Presidential Primary does NOT follow the open primary top two rules.

In California, **voters registered with a political party** will receive a ballot with only the presidential candidates running in their party.

### **But NPP voters have choices.**

The **Democrat and Libertarian parties allow NPPs to “cross over”** and vote in their primary. All NPP voters need to do is return the aforementioned notice sent to them by the County Elections Office and request the ballot of their desired party.

### **None of the other parties allow NPP voters to cross over.**

However, California law requires NPP voters to be informed that they also have an option to be sent the presidential primary ballot of one of the closed primary parties.

### **In order to do so they have to complete the additional step of changing their registration from NPP to that party.**

**ALL** voters (NPP or otherwise) have a change-of-heart option up to and including Election Day.

- NPP voters wishing to vote the Democrat or Libertarian presidential slate simply need to prove (through the County’s electronic poll book system or by surrendering the official ballot and envelope they were sent) that they have not already voted and request the ballot of their choice at the polls or the Elections Office.
- Other voters may use the “Same Day” registration option (Conditional Voter Registration) at the polls or County Elections Office and re-register with any chosen party, receive their ballot, and vote in the Primary of their choice.

It’s not simple, but it is understandable.

So relax, make your choices and then enjoy the end of the year festivities.

See you at the polls next year!!!!

## **Important Dates** ([from Secretary of State Website](#))

<a href="#">Early Voting</a> sites open	February 5, 2024
By this date, all counties shall open ballot drop-off locations for vote-by-mail ballots. To find a location, please visit: <a href="https://caearlyvoting.sos.ca.gov/">https://caearlyvoting.sos.ca.gov/</a>	February 6 – March 5, 2024
Last day to <a href="#">register to vote</a> for the primary election. To check your voter registration status, visit <a href="#">MyVoterStatus</a>	February 20, 2024**
<a href="#">Same Day Registration</a> available. Voters can "conditionally" register and vote a provisional ballot during this time (Note: E-13 due to State Holiday on February 19)	February 21 – March 5, 2024
<a href="#">Voter's Choice Act</a> counties to open Vote Centers	February 24, 2024*
Election Day – Polls shall be open throughout the state from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.	March 5, 2024
Beginning at 8:00 p.m., county elections officials begin reporting election results; counties shall conduct the semifinal official canvass of votes and report totals to the Secretary of State at least every two hours until completed.	March 5, 2024
Vote-By-Mail Ballots returned by mail, in order to be counted, must be postmarked on or before Election Day and received by your county elections office	March 12, 2024
Last day for county elections officials to certify election results	April 4, 2024

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