Patch

Politics & Government

Monmouth County Clerk Primary 2025: Christine Giordano Hanlon

Candidate Christine Giordano Hanlon shares why she's running for re-election as Monmouth County Clerk in 2025.

Sara Winick,Patch Staff

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MONMOUTH COUNTY, NJ — This year's Republican primary race is packed in Monmouth County with two candidates competing for one of the party's open nomination spots in the race for County Clerk.

In the Republican primary, incumbent Christine Giordano Hanlon is running for re-election against challenger Danielle Bellomo.

In the Democratic primary, candidate Alison De Noia is running uncontested for the party's nomination.

Early voting for the Primary Election will run from June 3 through June 8. Primary Election Day is June 10.

Christine Giordano Hanlon

Town of Residence: Ocean

Age: 57

Education: Fordham University, JD; Barnard College - Columbia University, Bachelor's Degree

Occupation: Monmouth County Clerk since 2015. Prior to assuming office, practiced law for 20+ years in the areas of government affairs and municipal law, and prior to that was a prosecutor.

What drove you to seek public office?

It has been a great honor to serve as your Monmouth County Clerk! I have always had a passion for public service and have held roles in public service throughout my life, both in a

professional and volunteer capacity. While there were many reasons for my decision to initially seek public office, I always point to the terrorist attacks on American soil on September 11, 2001, as the main impetus. That horrific event led me to become involved in the political system as a young mother concerned about what the future held for my family.

In the years that followed, I became increasingly involved in elections and politics in Monmouth County as a way to impact change in my community. This ultimately led me to run for County Clerk in 2015, when my accomplished predecessor, M. Claire French, retired from the position. After winning the election in 2015, I was fortunate to be elected again in 2020 by the voters of Monmouth County to serve another term, during which time we faced unprecedented challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

As Monmouth County Clerk, I've worked hard to consistently expand services, introduce new programs, improve technology and enhance accessibility. Most importantly, I have made it my mission to provide friendly, helpful and respectful services to the public across the five divisions of the County Clerk's Office.

I am seeking re-election to the position of Monmouth County Clerk to continue my mission to deliver top-tier services and implement new programs that improve the lives of our residents.

What sets you apart from the other candidates?

First and foremost, my experience as your Monmouth County Clerk makes me most qualified to continue in the position for another term. In addition, my educational and legal background, record of service, leadership experience and proven accomplishments set me apart from the other candidates whose public statements have demonstrated a lack of knowledge about what the position entails.

The Monmouth County Clerk is a very unique role with specific functions outlined by New Jersey's Constitution and laws. The position involves the official recording of property records such as deeds, mortgages and other documents. The County Clerk is also the Clerk of Elections and handles certain duties in the election process including preparing the ballots, issuing mail-in ballots, verifying certain candidate petitions and certifying election results. The Clerk of Election is one of three election offices, so we work in conjunction with the Board of Elections and the Superintendent of Elections, which are separate, independent offices. The County Clerk does not have jurisdiction or oversight of these other election offices but instead works alongside them to effectuate the election process.

In Monmouth, the County Clerk also has additional roles and responsibilities that have expanded over time. For instance, I oversee the Monmouth County Archives, where millions of government and historic records are housed and preserved. I also oversee the Office of Records Management, which digitizes permanent government records and makes them easily available to the public. The County Clerk also provides passport services and swears in all notaries public, among other duties. Recently, I was appointed by the Board of County Commissioners as Co-Chair of the county's planning initiative for America's upcoming 250th birthday celebration in 2026.

Since this wide range of functions often requires interpretation and analysis of New Jersey law, my legal background has not only equipped me to handle issues that can arise during daily transactions, but it provides me with the ability to analyze New Jersey's ever-changing election laws.

In addition, I served as a Commissioner on the Monmouth County Board of Elections for five years, during which time Superstorm Sandy hit New Jersey. This experience provided me with intensive training on election rules and emergency management, helping me as Clerk to develop emergency plans for our elections that are regarded as a benchmark in New Jersey. I have spearheaded and attended a multitude of training programs over the years in election best practices, crisis management and emergency preparedness. And, to promote election integrity and preparedness on the local level, I have facilitated at least 20 workshops for the clerks of our municipalities to deliver vital training needed.

My background as a college history major has prepared me well for overseeing our County Archives. I have embraced this role with enthusiasm and excitement, providing many opportunities for the public to see the fascinating historical collections we preserve as well as educating the public about our rich Monmouth County history. One such example is the County Clerk's annual Archives and History Day that takes place in October.

Read on to see more specifics about my accomplishments as County Clerk, or visit ChristineHanlon.vote.

What do you see as the biggest issue Monmouth County is facing, and how will you resolve it?

Because the Monmouth County Clerk's Office oversees specific services and not the overall governance of the County, I will address this question within the scope of the duties and functions of the County Clerk. One of the biggest issues the Monmouth County Clerk's Office faces relates to our state's ever-changing election laws.

There have been legislative changes to the election process practically every year in recent years, often on very short notice. Election officials throughout our state and county must quickly pivot and adjust to these changes while still ensuring integrity to the process and that the changes do not lead to voter confusion or skepticism. Some of these changes included the implementation of an all-mail-in ballot election in 2020, the rollout of early voting and electronic poll books in 2021, and major changes to the primary election process in 2025.

I fully expect even more changes in coming years, but as in years past, I will work with the Superintendent of Elections (handling voter registration, voting machines and poll books) and the Board of Elections (handling polling locations, poll workers and ballot counting) to adjust to any new laws and deliver an election process with integrity and transparency. In addition, I will continue to help voters remain informed and understand the process by adding to the extensive library of voter education materials I have already created. This includes an election website, a free mobile app, videos, brochures and pamphlets. Ensuring

Monmouth County voters are aware of all relevant changes and information about when and how to vote is a top priority for me.

While the County Clerk does not have the ability to change election law, I have and will continue to use my voice to object to any laws that erode the integrity of our elections process.

What are past accomplishments or experiences that make you qualified for this position?

Throughout my tenure as County Clerk, I've worked hard to create new programs and make top-tier government services more accessible than ever before. Here are just some highlights accomplished during my time as County Clerk:

- To improve transparent access to voting and elections resources, I launched two websites and a free mobile app for residents.
- To help give vote-by-mail voters peace of mind, I implemented the first and only enhanced ballot-tracking system in the state that provides status notifications.
- To improve outreach to Monmouth's 53 municipalities, I created Monmouth's first Mobile County Connection initiative in coordination with Sheriff Shaun Golden and Surrogate Maureen Raisch to bring our services directly to our communities.
- To demonstrate our gratitude to our many Monmouth County veterans, I created a veterans' discount program called "Honoring our Heroes" that has grown to 250+ participating Monmouth County businesses.
- To combat the rise of property fraud, I launched a free property fraud alert program for Monmouth County property owners.
- To modernize our county's record-keeping system, I spearheaded multiple digitization initiatives, allowing for many property and government records to be accessible to the public online.
- To engage our youth in Monmouth's history and civics, I initiated annual contests, including the High School Elections Voting and Video Contest and the Archives and History Day High School Photography Contest.
- To keep voters informed across our County, I implemented comprehensive education campaigns to ensure all voters have the resources they need about deadlines, changes and voting options.
- To ensure our young people learn how they can become active and engaged voters, I created "Your Vote Matters," a program I provide to our area high schools.

I'm proud to say that not only have we delivered more services to Monmouth County residents, but we have accomplished this while upholding high standards of fiscal responsibility for our hard-working taxpayers, with my office's revenue exceeding operating costs year after year. In addition, during my tenure, I have conducted internal workflow audits to streamline and expedite services.

Finally, my experience as an attorney, a prosecutor and as a Commissioner on the Monmouth County Board of Elections provides a strong foundation for ensuring that both

our election process and all other functions of the County Clerk's Office are carried out legally, with integrity and transparency.

If elected, what do you most hope to achieve in Monmouth County?

If re-elected, I plan to continue providing the residents of Monmouth County with efficient and accessible services in all divisions of the Monmouth County Clerk's Office. I will expand the Mobile County Connection initiative to visit more areas where we provide services directly to our residents throughout the county. I will also continue voter education initiatives so that Monmouth County voters feel comfortable and secure when casting their ballots. As in the past, I will continue to prioritize election integrity as Clerk of Elections, working hand-in-hand with the Superintendent of Elections and Board of Elections, each in our distinct roles in the election process.

As Co-Chair of the MonmouthNJ 250 Committee, I will also continue working toward a fitting tribute to America's 250th birthday here in Monmouth County with great patriotism and love for our country. I look forward to seeing these important events and programs currently being planned come to life for our residents as we get closer to America's Semiquincentennial celebration in 2026!

Name one thing about Monmouth County that always makes you smile.

I am a wife and mother of four, and I'm grateful that my children have grown up in beautiful Monmouth County. This has inspired my mission to help make Monmouth County the best County in New Jersey to raise our families. Monmouth County is truly a special place, from our breathtaking shoreline to the farms of western Monmouth.

What makes me smile is the promise Monmouth County holds for the next generation to thrive here for years to come!