

How **MICHIGAN** Ensures Safe and Secure Voting



Our freedom to vote in fair and secure elections is the foundation of our system of self-governance established under the U.S. Constitution. As citizens, we have a voice that many people around the world do not.

Because the majority of elections are run at a local level, the voting experience can be very different depending on where a voter lives, but all states, including Michigan, have verification processes in place before, during, and after votes are cast to ensure the integrity of the election. Whether you cast your ballot in-person or by mail, early or on Election Day, your vote counts.

Here is what you need to know about how elections work in Michigan to make sure that your vote is kept safe and secure and is counted with integrity.



Registration

To ensure their eligibility, all voters must register to vote in order to cast a ballot.

- You can register online, by mail, or in-person.
- If registering online or by mail, the deadline to register is **October 21, 2024**. In-person registration is available through **Election Day, Tuesday, November 5, 2024**.
- For more information: <https://www.michigan.gov/sos/elections/voting/absentee-voting>



Ways to Vote

Once registered, a voter in Michigan may either vote in-person or through an absentee ballot. Both options have transparent processes to ensure ballots are kept secure and counted accurately.

Vote with a mail-in or absentee ballot:

- **Voters must fill out an application by 5:00 PM November 1, 2024** to have an absentee mail ballot sent to them, though they should plan on submitting the absentee ballot application online at least 15 days before Election Day to ensure they have enough time to receive and send back their ballot. Election officials will review the application and confirm that the person applying is a registered voter and eligible to vote.
- **Absentee ballots must be received by 8:00 PM on Election Day Tuesday, November 5, 2024** to be counted.
- Find more information about voting absentee at: [Michigan.gov/Vote](https://michigan.gov/Vote)

Vote early in-person:

- Early voting starts on **October 26, 2024** and ends **November 3, 2024**. Some communities may choose to provide extra opportunities for early voting, offering up to 29 days where early voting is available.
- Find more information about early voting and identify your early voting site: <https://www.michigan.gov/sos/elections/voting/early-in-person-voting>

Vote in-person on Election Day:

- Election Day is **Tuesday, November 5, 2024**. Polls are open from **7:00 AM to 8:00 PM**.
- Voters need to bring a photo ID. Those who do not have a valid ID will be asked to sign an affidavit. If this happens your ballot will be included and counted with the others. Learn more at <https://mivic.sos.state.mi.us/Home/VoteInPerson/#id-required>
- Find more information about voting on Election Day: <https://www.michigan.gov/sos/elections/voting/vote-on-election-day>

There are also options for **military and overseas voting**, more information is available here: <https://www.michigan.gov/sos/elections/voting/military-and-overseas-voters>

Track your ballot: <https://mivic.sos.state.mi.us/Voter/Index>



Securely Counting Every Ballot During the Voting Period

Before, during, and after ballots are cast, Michigan has procedures to review and verify election processes. Voting equipment testing, ballot counting, post-election audits and recounts are open to the public.

- Michigan uses paper ballots, which leave a physical record of votes. These paper ballots are counted by a tabulation machine under the supervision of election officials, witnesses from the political parties and members of the public. Voters with disabilities may use a different type of machine to help them mark their ballot. These machines must produce a “voter verifiable paper audit trail.”
- All voting equipment in Michigan must meet rigorous security standards. They undergo thorough accuracy and security testing before each election to ensure ballots are recorded and counted accurately.
- Election inspectors use an electronic pollbook to check voter registration, and absentee votes are only counted after being verified.



Polls Close and Reporting Begins

- Unofficial election results start being reported shortly after polls close. Counting absentee ballots may take extra time due to the signature verification process required to ensure the integrity of every vote. **Michigan allows observers from major political parties to observe every stage of the vote counting.**
- No reported results are considered final until the election is certified



Certifying the Election

- The governing body conducting the election must meet to verify that the unofficial results reported in each precinct or election district were accurate. Final results are only declared after election officials go through steps to verify the count, checking for accuracy and resolving any errors. During this process, known as canvassing, election officials count every eligible ballot cast, check for duplicates, verify voter status, and give voters a chance to rectify mistakes that might otherwise disqualify their ballot.
- In Michigan, after local elections offices confirm the counting of all eligible votes, bipartisan boards of county canvassers have until November 19, 2024 to verify their accuracy.
- Then, the bipartisan Michigan State Board of Canvassers has until November 25, 2024 to complete their canvass.
- A recount of all state precincts is automatically triggered if the difference in votes between the top two statewide candidates is 2,000 votes or less. A candidate also can petition for a recount if they believe fraud or error led to an incorrect canvass in their election.
- Michigan requires an extensive procedural audit, including an audit of the results in at least one race in each precinct randomly selected for audit and at least one statewide race or ballot question for statewide elections. The audit reviews procedures performed before, during and after the conduct of an election.
- In Michigan, the State Board of Canvassers supervises all recounts.



Meeting of the Electoral College

- Michigan's slate of electors meets on December 17, 2024 to send their certified votes for president and vice president to Congress.



Resources

For more information on how elections work in Michigan, visit the Department of State: Michigan.gov/Vote

For additional national and other state-by-state information, go to <https://www.howelectionswork.org/>