

Are you ready for ranked-choice voting?

The June 12, 2018 primary election will be conducted using a method of ranked-choice voting. Ranked-choice voting, sometimes called “instant run-off voting,” allows voters to choose their candidates in order of preference, by marking candidates as their first, second, third, and subsequent choices.

The votes are tabulated in rounds, with the lowest-ranked candidates eliminated in each round until there are only two candidates remaining in the final round and the candidate with the most votes is declared the winner. It is different from our previous method of voting, in which voters choose only one candidate for each office and the winner is determined by plurality (whoever gets the most votes).

Ranked-choice voting is only applied when there are three or more candidates running for the same office. Thus, for the June 12, 2018 Primary Election, you will receive a ranked-choice ballot for: The Democratic and Republican nominations for the office of Governor; the Democratic nomination for the Representative to Congress in Congressional District 2; and the Republican nomination for Representative to the Maine Legislature in House District 75.

To mark the ballot for your first-choice candidate – the person who you would most like to see win the office – simply fill in the oval next to their name in the “1st Choice” column. If you wish to rank some or all of the remaining candidates in order of your preference, you may do so, or you can choose to vote for only your first choice. To mark a candidate as your second choice, fill in the oval next to their name in the “2nd Choice” column, and so on.

Governor	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	4th Choice	5th Choice	6th Choice	7th Choice	8th Choice
Duck, Donald	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Flintstone, Fred	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○
Grainger, Hermione	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○
Mouse, Michael	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	○
Man, Spider	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○
Man, Super	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○
Woman, Wonder	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○
Write-in	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

In the ballot example at right, the voter is choosing candidates in the gubernatorial primary. This person chose to rank all of the candidates, with Donald Duck marked as their first-choice candidate and Spider Man as their fifth-choice candidate.

You can find additional resources and details about ranked-choice voting on the Department of the Secretary of State website RCV Resources page, <http://maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/upcoming/rcv.html> You can vote at the polls on Primary Election Day, June 12, or request an absentee ballot from your town clerk or online at <http://maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/absent.html>

In addition to using ranked-choice voting in some races this June, voters will also decide on a People’s Veto referendum question that asks if they would like to continue using ranked-choice voting for future elections in Maine – for federal offices ONLY (U.S. Senate and U.S. Congress) in general elections, and for all state and federal offices in primary elections – or restore the delay mechanism that would require a constitutional amendment to fully implement RCV.