



What is a Closed Primary?

Florida is a closed primary state. If you wish to vote in a partisan primary election, you must be a registered voter in the party for which the primary is being held. All registered voters, regardless of party affiliation, can vote on issues and nonpartisan candidates in a primary election.

This is why it is important to indicate your preferred party affiliation at the time you register. If you leave the field blank on the registration form, you will be registered without party affiliation.

There are 12 states in the United States which use a strictly closed primary election process: Delaware, Florida, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Wyoming. For more information concerning the law in Florida, please refer to section 97.055, Florida Statutes.

Universal Primary Contests

There are times when all registered voters can vote in a primary election, regardless of which major or minor political party they are registered with, or even if they are registered without a specific party affiliation. During these elections, the race is considered to be a Universal Primary Contest. This occurs if all the candidates for an office have the same party affiliation, and the winner of the primary election will not face any opposition in the general election (i.e., no write-in candidates have qualified). All registered voters can vote for any of the candidates for that office in the primary election.

Nonpartisan Contests

When races for nonpartisan (i.e., free from party affiliation) judicial and school board offices, nonpartisan special districts, or local referendum questions are on the primary election ballot, then all registered voters, including those without party affiliation, are entitled to vote those races on the ballot.

General Elections

During a general election, all registered voters receive the same ballot and may vote for any candidate or question on the ballot. If there are write-in candidates who have qualified for a particular office, a space will be left on the ballot where their name can be written.

Party Changes

Party changes must be made by the end of the 29th day before the primary election. For a general election, a party change can be made at any time. A party change must be made in writing, and it must include either the voter's date of birth or Florida Voter Registration Number, as well as the voter's signature. **Click here to access a Florida Voter Registration Application form.**