

Arizona State Report

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Introduction

The election landscape in Arizona has evolved in recent years, making it one of the nation's most closely watched states on election night. The changing electorate and resulting slim vote margins, coupled with the state's use of mail ballots, have drawn much scrutiny, including from President Donald Trump. The state has also been the subject of [ongoing investigations by the U.S. Department of Justice](#) (DOJ) related to the 2020 election, and the target of [DOJ demands for state voter lists](#). Arizona's use of the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) system to identify non-citizens has drawn criticism given concerns over the database's [known inaccuracies](#). Additionally, in an effort to speed up ballot processing, administrators began implementing [ID-verified early ballot drop-off](#) this July, but have recently [expressed doubts about its effectiveness](#).

Voters cast their ballots in elections for statewide and federal offices, including the secretary of state, governor, and attorney general. Republican primaries for Congressional District 1 and District 5 were also on the ballot, with Rep. Andy Biggs and David Schweikert choosing to compete for the governorship rather than seek reelection. Overall, more conservative Republican candidates such as Biggs defeated their moderate counterparts to appear on the ballot in November. Endorsements from President Trump continued to carry weight among voters, with candidates such as Jay Feely and Mark Lamb winning the races for Congressional District 1 and District 5, respectively.

Data from the Arizona Secretary of State's office provide insight into voter turnout and registration and trends throughout the state. Voter turnout was lower this July, standing at 22% compared to 27.7% in the 2022 statewide primary election. Republican registrants increased compared to the 2022 primary election, continuing a trend of growth since 2016. In contrast, voters registered as Independent continued to grow, surpassing

registered Democrats by over 200,000 voters. Democratic registration has grown slightly, but remains below that of 2022.

General Election Calendar

Election dates in Arizona are set by the Legislature through statute. The Secretary of State's office is charged with administering the election calendar and publishes an official calendar on their [website](#). Key dates and deadlines for the 2026 general election are as follows:

- + **Oct. 5, 2026:** Last day to register to vote in the general election at 11:59 p.m.
- + **Oct. 7, 2026:** Early voting begins and early ballots mailed.
- + **Oct. 23, 2026:** Deadline to request a mail ballot.
- + **Oct. 30, 2026:** Early voting ends.
- + **Nov. 3, 2026:** General Election Day. Absentee ballots must be returned by 7 p.m.

Data Availability

The Arizona Secretary of State's office provides election data on voter registration, unofficial election night results, and official canvasses of election results dating back to 1912 as well as an archive of precinct-level results. Counties vary in the election data they publicly provide; however, data generally include canvass reports, provisional ballot reports, vote center early ballot drop-off estimates, and audit reports, among others. Arizona's statewide voter registration file is [only available upon request](#) from the Secretary of State, for a fee. More information on Arizona's election data is provided in the [Arizona Data Guide](#).

Election Administration Landscape

Maricopa County and the SAVE System

In August 2025, Maricopa County election officials [entered into an agreement](#) with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to access the [Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements](#) (SAVE) system to verify the citizenship of voters. Since then, the recorder's office has used the system to check the citizenship of more than 61,000 voters (approximately 2% of the county's 2.5 million [registered voters](#)) who were [incorrectly marked as having provided documentary proof of citizenship](#) by the state's Motor Vehicle Division. Approximately 137 Maricopa voters were [referred to county prosecutors](#) after being flagged by the SAVE system as potential non-citizens (approximately .005% of the [county's registered voters](#)).

Widespread use of the SAVE system for voter registration purposes [is relatively new](#), and has become [controversial among election administrators](#) given its [known limitations](#), particularly when it comes to assessing the status of foreign-born citizens. Gina Swoboda, a former chair of the Arizona Republican Party who ran in the July primary for secretary of state, [called SAVE an important tool for recorders](#), but said that election officials need to take additional steps to determine a voter's citizenship once flagged by the system.

Maricopa County officials have [yet to confirm](#) whether staff took any additional steps to confirm the citizenship status of the 137 voters flagged by SAVE beyond running their names through the system prior to referring them to prosecutors. Recent [legal battles have also highlighted](#) the uncertainty surrounding Arizona and other states' long-term access to the SAVE system for voter registration, and whether it can be used heading into the general election this fall.

Maricopa County Recorder and the Board of Supervisors Dispute

Just before the July 21 primary, Maricopa County Recorder Justin Heap and the county's Board of Supervisors [reached an agreement](#) to end a yearslong battle over control of certain election responsibilities in the county. Before Heap took office in 2025, [then-Recorder of Elections Stephen Richer signed an agreement](#) with the Board of Supervisors to split control of certain election duties between the Recorder and the Board, namely handing over control of the county's IT-related systems and staff to the Board. In Arizona, [county recorders are often responsible for](#) voter registration processes and administering early voting, while the [Board of Supervisors is responsible for](#) Election Day operations. Determining who is explicitly responsible for what requires coordination among the two entities.

Tensions came to a breaking point in 2025, when Heap [filed an initial lawsuit](#) alleging that the Board was “illegally attempting to seize control of statutorily delegated election operations” by refusing to approve the disbursement of funds to audit the county's voter registration system. A Superior Court [Judge ruled in Heap's favor](#), but the Board received a stay of the ruling shortly thereafter due to concerns regarding administrative changes leading up to the spring primary election. Heap soon elevated the case to the State Supreme Court, which sided in his favor, [resulting in an agreement signed by both parties](#) in July of 2026. Under the agreement, the Recorder's office will receive its own IT system, staff for a new early voting division, retain control of voter registration, and oversee several aspects of early, in-person voting and mail voting. The Board will continue to draw precinct boundaries, prepare the county's ballots, and determine the number of early voting sites and the location of drop boxes throughout the county.

Judging from previous elections, Maricopa County will likely play a decisive role in determining the outcome of the state's elections and will be the focus of national attention come November. Although the agreement was reached ahead of the July

primary, its provisions will not come into effect until the November election, raising concerns over how disagreements will be handled and whether administration issues will arise. Despite lingering tensions, Maricopa election officials ran a smooth primary on July 21, only encountering a [minor issue with the county's e-poll books](#) connecting to the voter registration database, which affected roughly four voters.

U.S. Department of Justice Involvement in Arizona

The U.S. Department of Justice's involvement in Arizona election matters, which began in 2025, expanded in 2026. Following a [grand jury subpoena](#) in March, the Arizona state Senate turned over more than 200 terabytes of election data related to the 2020 election and the legislative chamber's inquiry into the 2020 election results. This [subpoena sought](#) reports produced by the Cyber Ninjas, a Florida firm hired by the Arizona Senate to audit the 2020 election results; electronic hardware (e.g., thumb drives, external hard drives) in the possession of the Senate; and documentation of forensic investigations of the Maricopa County Elections Department electronic systems, among other things. These efforts signal the persistence of federal officials in investigating 2020 election results despite [previous audits having found no proof of fraud](#).

The DOJ has also attempted to access Arizona's statewide voter registration list, including voters' full names, dates of birth, addresses, driver's license numbers, and partial Social Security numbers, during the runup to the 2026 election. The department made initial requests for this information under former Attorney General Pam Bondi in late June 2025, followed by a more specific demand in August, which Secretary of State Adrian Fontes denied. In a [press release](#) issued by the Secretary of State's office, Fontes stated that, "Arizona law strictly prohibits the disclosure of this information, and releasing it would subject state officials to felony liability." He also stated that the DOJ did not explain how its authority would preempt Arizona's own privacy protections, or how the request would comply with the federal Privacy Act of 1974.

The DOJ [filed suit against Arizona and Connecticut](#) in January 2026 for failing to provide access to voter rolls, [citing the department's legal authority](#) under Title III of the Civil Rights Act of 1960 to investigate compliance with the National Voter Registration Act and the Help America Vote Act, which govern certain voter registration and voter list maintenance practices. The DOJ appealed the dismissal in June 2026, but the Ninth Circuit subsequently [held briefing in abeyance](#) pending its decisions in similar appeals from California and Oregon.

In July 2026, Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Harmeet Dhillon [sent a letter](#) to the Arizona Secretary of State's office threatening to prosecute election officials who "knowingly and willfully" count the ballots of non-citizen voters or refrain from removing them from voter rolls. This letter was [substantially similar](#) to letters eventually sent to all 50 states and D.C. In a [statement](#) released by the Secretary of State's office, Secretary Adrian Fontes reiterated the state's list maintenance protocols in place to keep elections secure and stated that, "Arizona election officials have always worked to ensure that only eligible citizens are registered to vote, and we will continue following Arizona law—not directions that come from political rhetoric or intimidation." While the letter cites several federal laws, [election law experts argued that](#) prosecuting election officials on these matters would be extremely difficult, as it would require proving intent on the part of those officials.

The DOJ letter regarding non-citizen voting came two weeks before agency officials announced that they would [send election monitors to three Arizona counties on the day of its July 21 primary](#). Monitors were sent to Maricopa, Apache, and Pima counties to "ensure transparency, ballot security, and compliance with federal law." Election officials in these counties provided DOJ monitors with credentials to observe vote-casting procedures at various poll sites. DOJ officials characterized the monitoring as

routine, pointing to the [previous deployment of monitors under the Biden administration](#) in 2024, and stated that DOJ personnel would be available to receive complaints through the general election this fall, as well.

I.D. Verified Early Ballot Drop-Off

In Arizona, an increase in the number of voters who cast their ballot early has led to slower ballot processing times, due in part to the length of the signature verification process. Signature verification, whereby a trained election worker reviews the signature provided on a ballot envelope to ensure it matches the signature on file for that voter, is the most common way states [verify the identity of mail voters](#). In Arizona, election workers conduct signature verification on all ballots received by mail, which, according to the U.S. Election Assistance Commission's [Election Administration and Voting Survey](#) (EAVS), constitute approximately three-quarters or more of ballots cast in federal elections in the state.

In addition to early ballots returned by mail, Arizona allows voters to drop their early ballots off in-person through the close of polls on Election Day, an option used by many voters. According to [figures released by the Secretary of State](#), in the 2024 general election an estimated 264,554 early ballots were dropped off at polling places on Election Day alone, constituting just over 7.5% of [total ballots cast](#). Traditionally, early ballots returned at voting locations on Election Day have undergone signature verification and tabulation after Election Day, which can lead to significant delays in ballot processing.

The signature curing process can also contribute to lengthy ballot processing times in states that conduct signature verification on ballots marked outside the polling place. In Arizona, if an issue with a voter signature is identified, election workers must make reasonable efforts to notify the voter of the issue and allow them to correct it. This

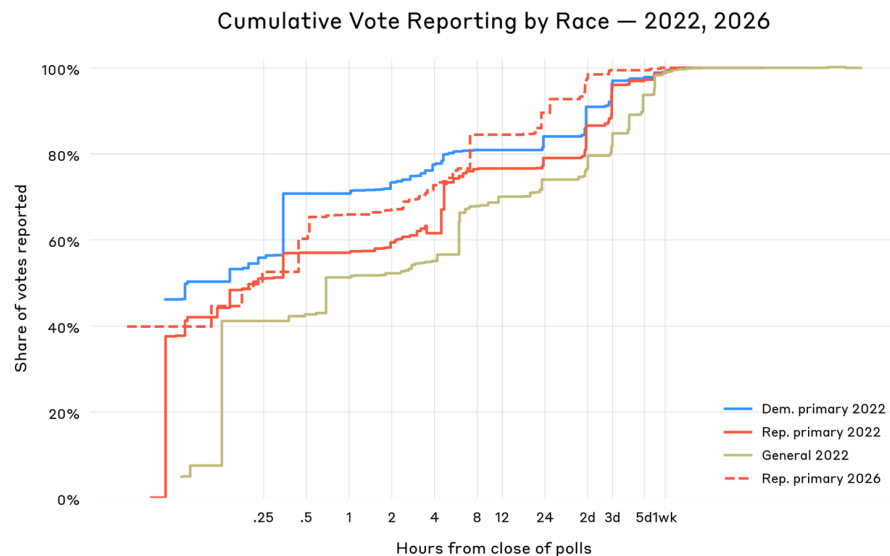
process is known as signature curing. For all federal elections held through 2026, voters in Arizona have until [5:00 p.m. on the fifth calendar day](#) after Election Day to cure issues with their signature. This means that if any ballot with a signature issue is cured, it may be counted within this window.

In 2024, bottlenecks caused by the signature verification process resulted in [significant delays](#) and prompted the Arizona Legislature to enact [House Bill 2785](#) (2024), which instituted “[ID Verified Early Ballot Drop Off](#)” beginning in 2026. Using this new method, voters can return their early ballot in person and present the [required identification](#) to a poll worker. The poll worker will then verify the voter’s identification against their voter registration and stamp the ballot envelope as “ID Verified”. Voters then place their ballot in a ballot box. When ballots are processed, those that have “ID Verified” displayed on the envelope do not undergo the signature verification process prior to tabulation. Under the new law, any voter with their own early ballot who presents sufficient ID and other required information at drop-off can utilize this new method.

Increases in vote counting speeds between the 2022 and 2026 primary elections suggest that ID verified early ballot drop-off may have had a positive impact on ballot processing, [although other factors](#) may have also been in play.. Charles Stewart III, director of the MIT Election Data and Science Lab, analyzed Arizona vote reporting speeds in the 2022 primary and 2026 primary elections for this report. He found that votes cast in the 2026 Republican primary were reported slightly faster than in 2022—in 2026, approximately 10 percentage points more ballots had been reported by one hour after the close of polls (see figure below).

Increases in ballot counting speed in 2026 could be seen in counties such as Maricopa County, where [signature verification was completed within 13 hours](#) of the close of

polls. In a statement by Recorder Justin Heap, this improvement marked an “unprecedented milestone” and set “a new benchmark for the speed and efficiency of signature verification during a primary election.” ID verified early ballot drop-off was less popular in counties such as Pima, where the [Recorder’s office stated](#) that the new system delayed ballot processing by creating additional steps. Pima County processed around 12,000 in-person ballot drop-offs during the July primary, of which 6,000 went through ID verification at the time of drop-off. The Recorder’s office also stated that voters had mixed opinions on the new process, with some feeling singled out based on how they were approached for the verified ID option and others feeling as though ID verification was mandatory.



Graph source: MIT Election Data + Science Lab
Data source: Arizona Secretary of State

The figure above depicts a line graph showing the results reporting speed for the state of Arizona in the 2022 Democratic and Republican primaries, the 2022 general election, and the 2026 Republican primary. Solid lines represent votes reported in 2022 elections, while dotted lines represent votes reported in the 2026 primary election.

Reduced Language Assistance in Smaller Counties

Over the past two years, several smaller counties in Arizona have [stopped providing printed paper ballots in Spanish](#) for voters with limited English proficiency. This includes [Apache](#) County in April 2026 and [Gila](#) and [Mohave](#) counties before the 2024 election. Together, these counties are home to about 51,500 Hispanic residents (2.2% of the state's total Hispanic population) as of 2026. Election officials in both Apache and Gila counties have asserted that Spanish ballot translations are still available on their ExpressVote machines. However, this would require Spanish-speaking voters to cast a ballot in person, in a state in which three-quarters of voters used mail ballots in 2024.

Under [Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act](#) (VRA), only four Arizona counties—Maricopa, Pima, Yuma, and Santa Cruz—are legally required to provide election materials and ballots in Spanish for all elections because of the size of their Spanish-speaking population. While the VRA does not require non-covered counties to provide language assistance to Spanish speakers, the Secretary of State's [pre-election guidance](#) strongly encourages that they continue to provide language assistance in Spanish.

Recent Policy and Law Changes

Documentary Proof of Citizenship Litigation

In 2022, Arizona passed two laws, [House Bill 2492](#) and [House Bill 2243](#), that impacted documentary proof of citizenship (DPOC) requirements and procedures for canceling non-citizens' voter registration. House Bill 2492, which narrowly passed the House, imposed new citizenship and residency verification requirements for voter registration and sought to restrict voters without DPOC from voting for president or by mail. House Bill 2243 expanded procedures for investigating voters' citizenship and canceling registrations when officials obtain information confirming that a registrant is not a citizen.

On June 29, 2026, the U.S. Supreme Court [agreed to hear](#) the case [Republican National Committee \(RNC\) v. Mi Familia Vota](#), which challenges the DPOC requirements and voter registration cancellation procedures established in these laws. More specifically, the case considers whether the [National Voter Registration Act](#) (NVRA) or a [2018 consent decree](#) prevents Arizona from requiring DPOC from applicants using the state registration form, and whether the NVRA prevents Arizona from canceling the registration of people determined not to be citizens within 90 days of a federal election.

The initial legal challenges underpinning this case date back to March [2022](#), when several nonprofits filed suit in the U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona. These cases were consolidated, and the district court enjoined numerous provisions after summary judgment and a bench trial. The Ninth Circuit [affirmed](#) the district court in part, vacated it in part, and remanded the case for additional proceedings. The Ninth Circuit decided the appeals in February 2025, and the U.S. Supreme Court granted certiorari on June 29, 2026.

An important part of the appellate history occurred in August 2024, when the Supreme Court partially granted a stay requested by the Republican intervenors. The stay allowed Arizona to enforce the provision requiring election officials to reject state-form registration applications submitted without DPOC, while leaving injunctions against other challenged provisions in place. Because the Supreme Court subsequently granted certiorari, that partial stay remains effective until the Court issues its judgment.

The Supreme Court will hear RNC v. Mi Familia Vota in its upcoming term, which begins in October 2026. Because a ruling on the case is not likely until the Spring of 2027, the state will likely not see any changes to current DPOC requirements this fall. However, the potential impacts of this case on the future of Arizona elections are

sizable. Arizona utilizes a [bifurcated registration system](#), where DPOC is required for full-ballot eligibility. A qualified citizen who lacks verified DPOC may register as a federal-only voter using the federal registration form. Because of the 2024 stay, an applicant who submits the Arizona state form without DPOC may be rejected and must use the federal form to obtain federal-only status. Any change to these requirements would impact voter list maintenance practices throughout the state and require extensive voter education campaigns. Election officials and policymakers throughout the country are closely watching this case given its implications for recent [state](#) and national efforts to institute similar DPOC requirements for voter registration.

Shifting Primary Date

Beginning in 2020, Arizona's permanent law scheduled the primary for the first Tuesday in August (although the Legislature temporarily moved the 2024 primary to July 30), leaving election officials roughly three months to prepare for the November general election. In February of this year, Governor Katie Hobbs signed [House Bill 2022](#), permanently moving the primary to the second-to-last Tuesday in July. The bill passed with enough votes to secure emergency authorization, which meant it took immediate effect for the 2026 election cycle. This is not the first time Arizona has permanently changed the date of its primary; the state has moved it twice before through [Senate Bill 1074](#) (2009) and [Senate Bill 1154](#) (2019), which moved the primary up [by a cumulative 42 days](#). In 2024, the Arizona Legislature [temporarily changed](#) the date of its statewide primary to July 30.

The primary [impetus behind the new primary date](#) was to give election officials more time to meet absentee ballot mailing deadlines for military and overseas ballots. Under the [Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment Act](#), election officials throughout the U.S. must transmit ballots to military and overseas voters at least 45-days prior to a federal election. Failure to comply with the deadline [may result in](#) federal enforcement litigation against the state. In Arizona, recounts from the primaries could compress

timelines for election officials to finalize and transmit ballot materials for the general election prior to the 45-day deadline. Given that state policymakers recently increased the [threshold for automatic recounts](#), the likelihood that a recount will occur has increased, and the need for more time to meet the 45-day deadline has grown.

Return to Five-Business-Day Curing Period

Arizona's [permanent statute](#) allows voters until the fifth business day following a federal election to cure an inconsistent signature on an early-ballot envelope.

[Legislation enacted in 2024](#) temporarily shortened that period to five calendar days for federal elections held in 2024, 2025, and 2026. Beginning with elections held in 2027, the temporary provision will no longer apply, and the permanent five-business-day deadline will resume.

Because Arizona typically holds its elections on a Tuesday, this change gives voters until the [Tuesday after Election Day](#) to cure their ballot, rather than the Sunday after Election Day. The ballot curing provisions in [House Bill 2022](#) will not come into effect until January 2027, but are intended to help Arizona voters more successfully navigate the curing process. While they will not need to implement these changes in 2026, election officials have expressed concerns regarding the impacts that an extended ballot curing window might have on ballot processing times.

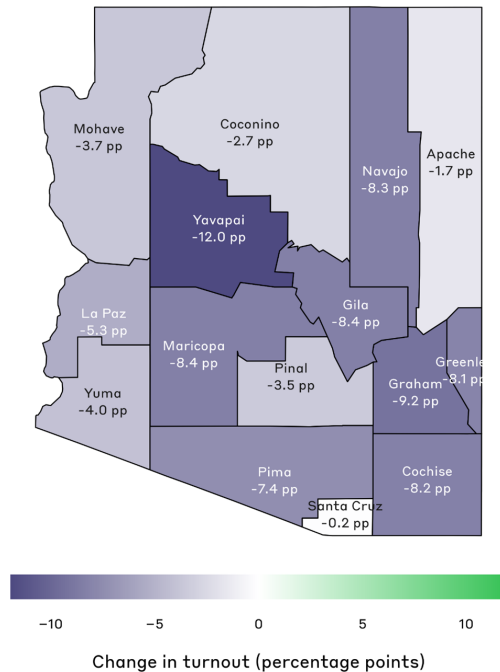
2026 Primary Election Analysis

Voter Turnout

Arizona held its statewide primary election on July 21, 2026, with early voting beginning on June 24. Despite several highly contested races on the ballot, overall voter turnout decreased relative to the 2022 statewide primary election. In the 2022 statewide primary, voter turnout stood at 27.7% compared to 22% in 2026. Declines in turnout were most

significant in Yavapai (-12 pp), Graham (-9.2 pp), Gila (-8.4 pp), and Navajo counties (-8.4 pp).

Change in Voter Turnout by Arizona County
2022, 2026 Primary Elections



Graph source: MIT Election Data + Science Lab
Data source: Arizona Secretary of State

*The figure above depicts a county-level map of Arizona shaded by the overall change in voter turnout when comparing voter participation in the 2022 primary election and the 2026 primary election. The color scale ranges from purple to green, with darker purple representing a larger decrease in turnout and darker green representing a larger increase in voter turnout. Please note, this graph calculates changes in turnout using the number of **registered** voters in Arizona, not the number of **eligible** voters.*

Notable Results and Contests

Governor

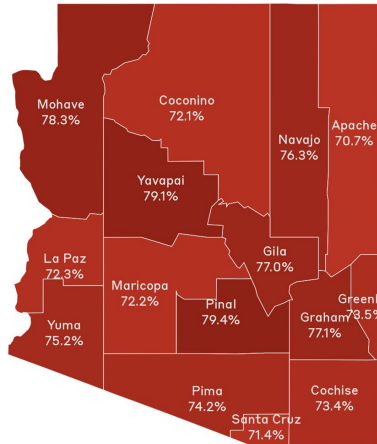
Arizona's gubernatorial primary is one of the most closely followed and highly contested races in July. Incumbent Katie Hobbs ran uncontested in the Democratic

primary, but has been [referred to as](#) “the most vulnerable Democratic governor in the country.” Hobbs narrowly won the election in 2022 (by [less than one percent of total votes cast](#)), when she ran against Kari Lake. In the Republican primary, U.S. Representative Andy Biggs and U.S. Representative David Schweikert quickly emerged as front-runners after launching gubernatorial campaigns rather than seeking re-election for their seats in the U.S. House of Representatives. 2022 primary contender Karrin Taylor Robson also made a bid for the Republican nomination in 2026, but later [dropped out of the race](#) despite securing an endorsement from President Trump.

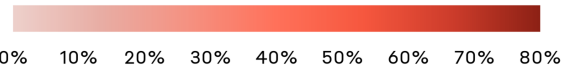
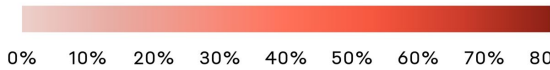
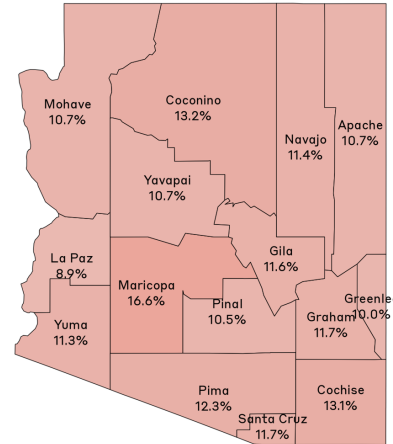
During his time in Congress, Biggs represented Congressional District 5 and was a member of the Freedom Caucus; he was also among the members of Congress who [voted not to certify](#) the 2020 election results. Schweikert, whose Congressional District 1 has a more mixed electorate, has sought more support from independent voters and focused on fiscal issues. Notably, the two candidates [differed in their stances](#) on mail-in voting. Biggs supported the [Arizona Secure Elections Act](#), which would shorten the early voting period to end the Friday before the election. Schweikert cautioned against the bill, stating that, “voters like the mail-in voting system,” and that “he isn’t sure voters are ready for that change.”

As primary election results began rolling in, Biggs took an early and commanding lead that only grew as precincts reported results. The majority of votes Biggs received were cast via mail, drop box, or in-person drop-off (about 83%, or 379,019 votes); Schweikert received a slightly larger share of early votes cast in relation to total votes received. Approximately 88% of all votes cast for Schweikert were early votes, while 83% of all votes cast for Biggs were early votes.

Biggs Vote Share by County



Schweikert Vote Share by County



Graph source: MIT Election Data + Science Lab
Data source: Arizona Secretary of State

The figure above depicts a county-level map of Arizona shaded by the proportion of votes received by candidates Andy Biggs and David Schweikert in the primary for governor. The color scale ranges from light to dark red, with light red indicating a smaller vote share, and dark red indicating a larger vote share.

County-level results reveal that Biggs won by a significant margin throughout the state. As shown above, Biggs won all 15 counties, and his largest margins were in Pinal County (the state's third largest county, located between Phoenix and Tucson), where he won 79.4% of the total votes cast. He won by the slimmest margin in Apache County, where he still received 71% of total votes cast. Across all counties, about 82% of total ballots cast in the gubernatorial primary were early ballots, meaning that voters returned them via mail, drop box, or in-person ballot drop-off.

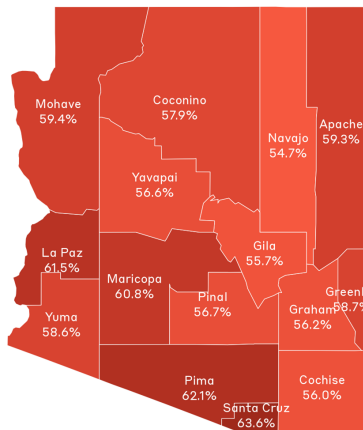
Secretary of State

In the July primary, two Republican candidates competed for the chance to face incumbent Adrian Fontes (D) in the race for secretary of state this fall. The two candidates—Gina Swoboda and state representative Alexander Kolodin—held diverging

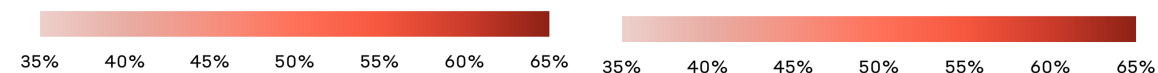
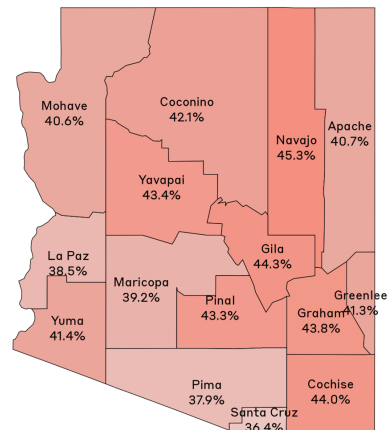
views on election integrity and how elections should be run in the state. Representative Kolodin led [multiple lawsuits](#) following the 2020 and 2022 elections, alleging widespread interference. These cases were dismissed, and Kolodin was subsequently [sanctioned by the State Bar of Arizona](#) and [required to pay a fine and take mandatory ethics classes](#). Kolodin's opponent, Gina Swoboda, ran on strengthening partnerships with election officials and stakeholders to implement technology improvements, expand use of drop boxes, and allocate funds to ensure those drop boxes were more secure. Swoboda previously worked for the Secretary of State's office and [helped draft state election legislation](#) during her tenure as chair of the Arizona Republican Party.

As precincts began reporting their results on Election Night, Kolodin took an early lead against Swoboda, earning approximately 55% of [early votes tabulated in the counties' first report](#). His lead grew over time, with final [results from the Secretary of State's office](#) indicating a winning margin of 19.7%, or 113,692 votes. Kolodin carried all 15 Arizona counties, performing the best in Santa Cruz, Pima, and La Paz counties (see figure below). Swoboda performed the best in Navajo, Gila, and Cochise counties, where she earned approximately 45% of total votes cast.

Kolodin Vote Share by County



Swoboda Vote Share by County



Graph source: MIT Election Data + Science Lab
Data source: Arizona Secretary of State

The figure above depicts a county-level map of Arizona shaded by the proportion of votes received by Alexander Kolodin and Gina Swoboda in the primary for Arizona Secretary of State. The color scale ranges from light to dark red, with light red indicating a smaller vote share, and dark red indicating a larger vote share.

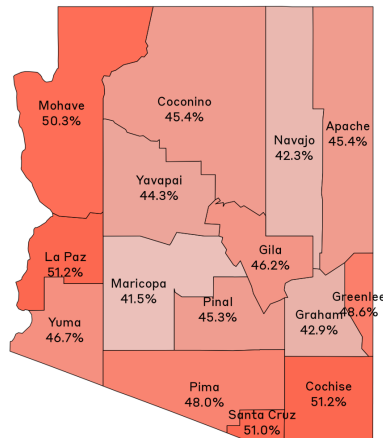
In the general election this fall, Kolodin will face Adrian Fontes, who won the election in 2022 by a slim margin. In that election, Fontes [received the majority of votes](#) cast in Santa Cruz County (approximately 70% of votes cast in that county), one of Kolodin's best-performing counties by a significant margin. Because the secretary of state serves as Arizona's top election official, the outcome of this race will likely have significant implications for how future elections in Arizona are run, given the candidates' diverging views on election administration. During his tenure as Secretary, Fontes has focused on modernizing [ballot tracking technology](#) and strengthening voter trust in the security of Arizona elections; over the past several years, Kolodin has publicly cast doubt on the state's election results and integrity.

Attorney General

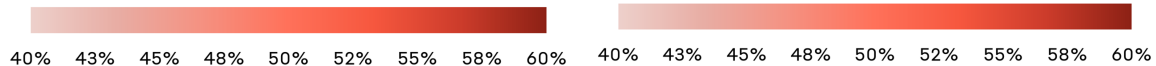
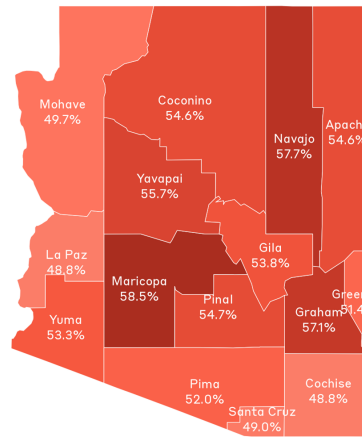
In the Arizona race for Attorney General, State Senate President Warren Petersen faced attorney Rodney Glassman in the Republican primary. Glassman is a former Democrat who [previously lost](#) the Republican primary for Attorney General to Abe Hamadeh in 2022. Hamadeh went on to lose the 2022 general election to current Attorney General Kris Mayes by [only 280 votes](#). The race between Petersen and Glassman has centered on their [qualifications and electability](#), with Petersen highlighting his leadership in the state Legislature and Glassman emphasizing his experience practicing military law in the United States Air Force JAG Corps Reserve.

On July 21, Petersen defeated Glassman by a margin of 75,782 votes (13%), receiving 56.4% of total votes cast. He performed the strongest in Maricopa, Navajo, and Graham counties, indicating wide appeal to Republicans in both rural and urban areas throughout the state. Glassman received the majority of votes cast in only four counties (Mohave, La Paz, Santa Cruz, and Cochise), albeit by a slim margin.

Glassman Vote Share by County



Petersen Vote Share by County



Graph source: MIT Election Data + Science Lab
Data source: Arizona Secretary of State

The figure above depicts a county-level map of Arizona shaded by the proportion of votes received by Warren Petersen and Rodney Glassman in the primary for Arizona Attorney General. The color scale ranges from light to dark red, with light red indicating a smaller vote share, and dark red indicating a larger vote share.

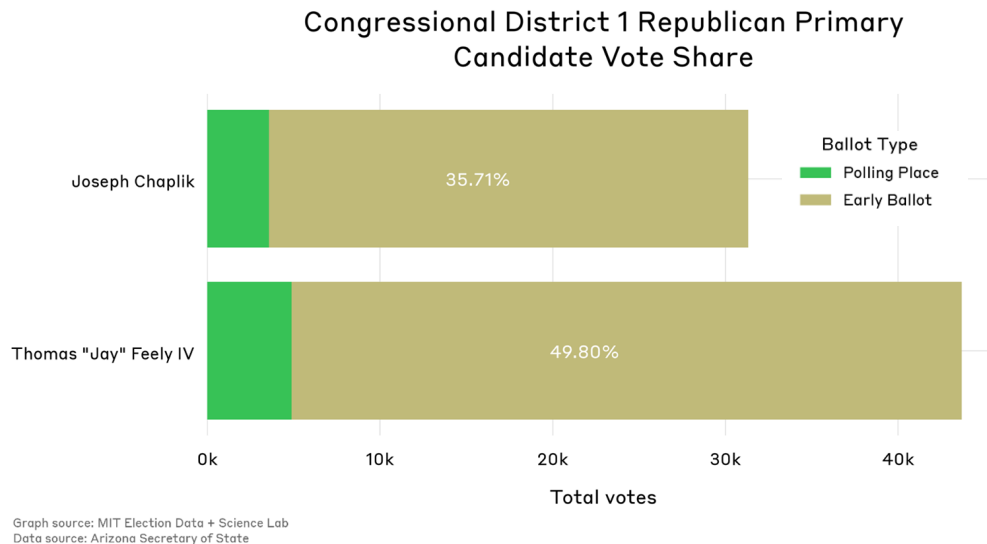
In the general election this fall, Petersen will run against Democratic incumbent Kris Mayes, who faced no opposition in the Democratic Party this July. Mayes was elected Attorney General in 2022 by a razor-thin margin of [511 votes](#). Of the counties that Petersen won in the primary, Maricopa is the only county that Mayes [carried during the 2022 general election](#) (by 25,909 votes). Given the likelihood that this contest will be close and the [lowered threshold for automatic recounts](#) in the state, the race for Attorney General this fall will likely be in the spotlight.

U.S. House of Representatives District 1

The race for Congressional District 1 is worth noting given its relationship to the race for governor and its implications for the future balance of power in the U.S. House. As discussed above, U.S. Representative David Schweikert formerly represented District 1 and did not seek reelection in order to run in the gubernatorial primary this year. Three

candidates—Thomas “Jay” Feely, Joseph Chaplik, and John Trobough—competed for the Republican nomination this July.

The Republican primary proved relatively uncompetitive, with Jay Feely earning [49.8% of total votes cast](#) (see figure below). Feely was followed by Chaplik, who won 35.7% of total votes cast. Feely is a former NFL player who was endorsed by President Donald Trump and has not held political office before. His main challenger, Joseph Chaplik, was elected state representative in 2020 for Legislative District 23, representing District 3 following redistricting. [Chaplik’s campaign](#) emphasized that he was “conservative, common sense, experienced, and trusted,” while Feely campaigned on issues of border security [and putting](#) “America First.”

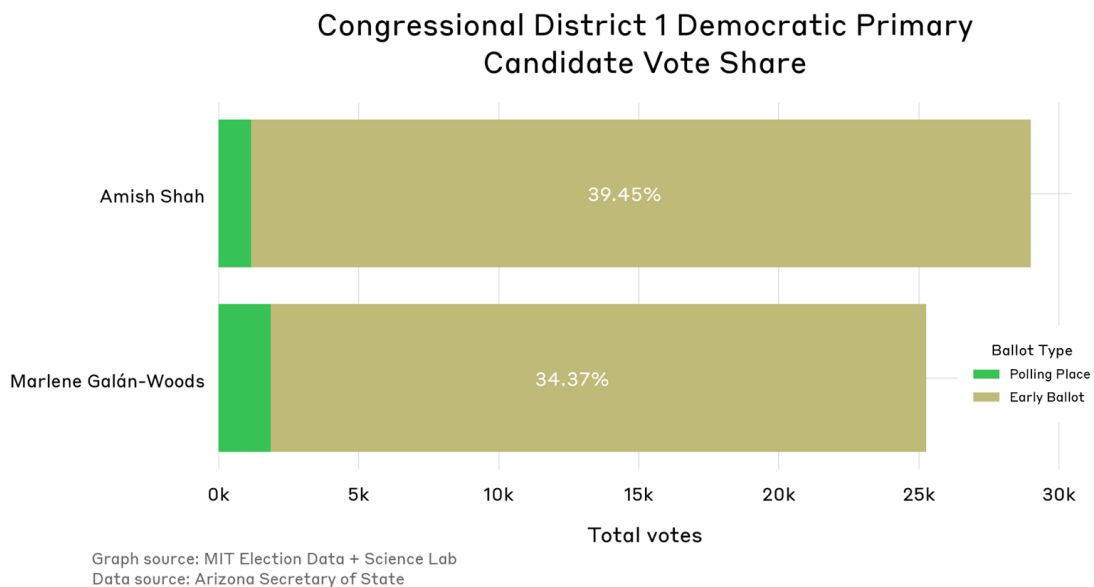


The figure above depicts a bar graph of the results of the Republican primary for Arizona Congressional District 1. Green bars correspond to polling place votes cast in the race, while gold bars correspond to early votes cast in the race. Only the two candidates receiving the most votes are depicted in this figure.

In the Democratic primary, two frontrunners competed in a close race for the chance to advance to the general election this fall. Amish Shah is a former state representative for

Legislative District 24, and also previously represented Legislative District 5 from 2023 to 2024. Shah left his seat in 2024 to run against David Schweikert to represent District 1 in the U.S. House of Representatives, but [lost by 16,572 votes](#). Leading up to the primary, Shah centered his campaign on [healthcare access and grassroots organization](#). Shah’s main competition was Marlene Galán-Woods, a former Republican who [left the party following](#) Trump’s election as President. [In a 2024 debate](#), she stated that, “I have always been pro-choice, pro-democracy, pro-climate. My values have never changed. What changed was the Republican Party.”

Shah defeated Galán-Woods in the July primary by [3,735 votes](#), or a margin of about 5% of total votes cast. Heading into the primary, Galán-Woods had the backing of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) in Washington. Her defeat [may signal a willingness](#) among Arizona Democrats to support candidates without the backing of the democratic establishments like the DCCC. Shah will compete against Feely in November, aiming to flip the district.



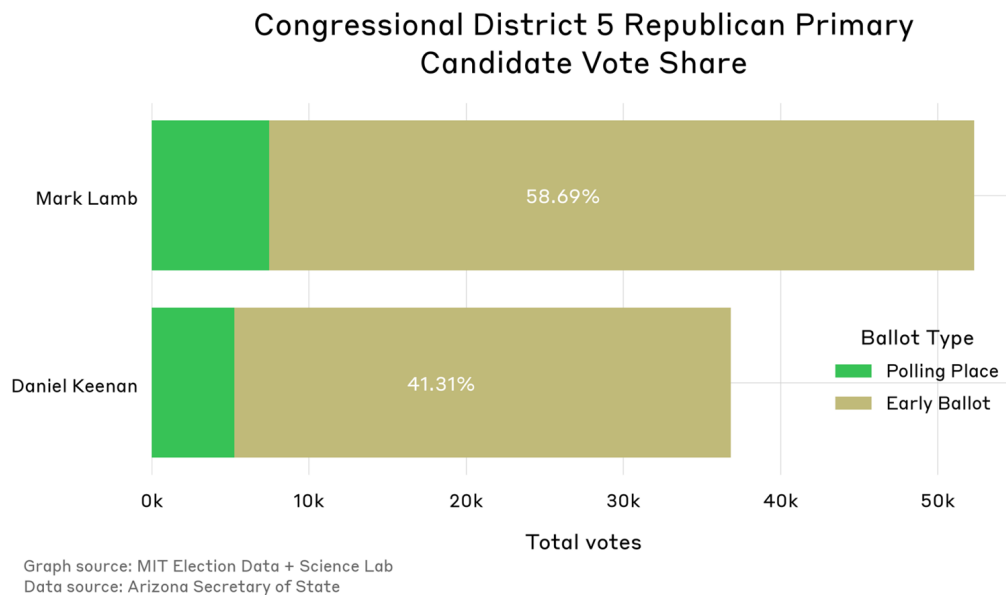
The figure above depicts a bar graph of the results of the Democratic primary for Arizona Congressional District 1. Green bars correspond to polling place votes cast in the race, while gold bars correspond to early votes cast in the race. Only the two candidates receiving the most votes are depicted in this figure.

U.S. House of Representatives District 5

As in Congressional District 1, District 5's sitting congressman did not seek reelection for his seat in the House of Representatives in order to run in the Republican primary for governor. Congressman Andy Biggs formerly represented Arizona Congressional District 5, which encompasses the Southeast suburbs of Phoenix. District 5 is widely considered to be a solidly Republican district, meaning that the winner of the Republican primary will likely be the frontrunner for the November general election.

Two candidates competed for the Republican nomination: Mark Lamb and Daniel Keenan. Lamb served as Pinal County Sheriff from 2017 to 2024 and [was endorsed by President Donald Trump](#) in 2025. He previously ran for the U.S. Senate in 2024, but was defeated by Kari Lake in the Republican primary [by 116,000 votes](#). In 2026, Lamb faced Daniel Keenan, who has a professional background in construction. Keenan's bid for District 5 was his first campaign for public office, [during which he argued](#) that Lamb had been insufficiently loyal to President Trump on the subject of 2020 election fraud claims.

Although he faced [allegations](#) of sexual misconduct, Lamb defeated Keenan by a margin of 15,498 votes, receiving 52,352 votes or 58.7% of total votes cast. The overwhelming majority of votes cast in this race were early ballots (consisting of ballots returned via mail, drop box, or in-person drop-off). Overall, only 11.4% of votes were cast in-person. Both candidates received roughly the same proportion of in-person votes versus early ballots, with Lamb receiving approximately 14.3% of his votes via in-person voters and Keenan receiving approximately 14.3%.

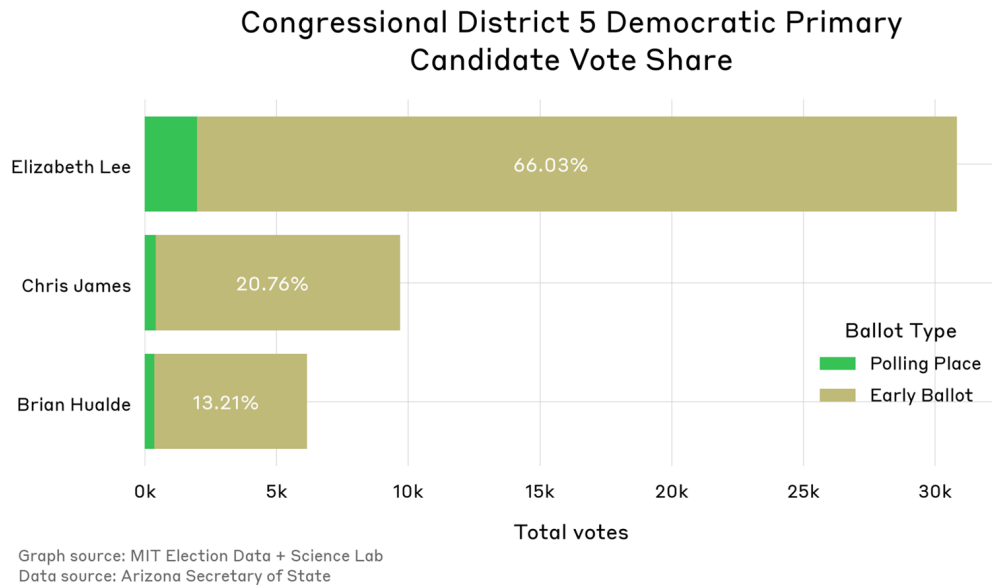


The figure above depicts a bar graph of the results of the Republican primary for Arizona Congressional District 5. Green bars represent votes cast in-person, while gold bars represent votes cast early.

Three candidates competed in the Democratic primary for Congressional District 5: Elizabeth Lee, Chris James, and Brian Hualde. Lee is a nurse who [ran on](#) expanding healthcare access, investing in the public school system, and improving affordable housing options. Her bid for District 5 was her first campaign for public office. Lee was joined in the candidate field by Chris James, who [leveraged his career in public service](#) with the U.S. Treasury and Small Business Administration to run on addressing economic issues. The third candidate, Brian Hualde, had deeper generational ties to Arizona than his opponents, and [ran on fighting for](#) “working families, affordable healthcare, and a government that actually works for the people.”

Lee won the Democratic Party’s nomination by an overwhelming majority, earning [66.0% of total votes cast](#), or 30,857 votes. James followed in second place, receiving 20.8% of votes cast; Hualde only received 13.2% of votes cast, or 6,171 votes. Overall, significantly fewer votes were cast in the Democratic primary for District 5 than the Republican primary—46,731 votes, compared to 89,206 votes cast in the Republican

primary. Fewer of these ballots were cast in person compared to the Republican primary. Lee received about 6% of her votes via in-person votes, while James received 4% and Hualde 6%. In contrast, Mark Lamb received 14.27% of his total votes via in-person votes, with Daniel Keenan receiving 14.28%. Lee will face Lamb in the November election, seeking to be the first woman to represent District 5 and the first Democrat to represent the district since 2011.



The figure above depicts a bar graph of the results of the Republican primary for Arizona Congressional District 5. Green bars represent votes cast in-person, while gold bars represent votes cast early.

Voting Mode

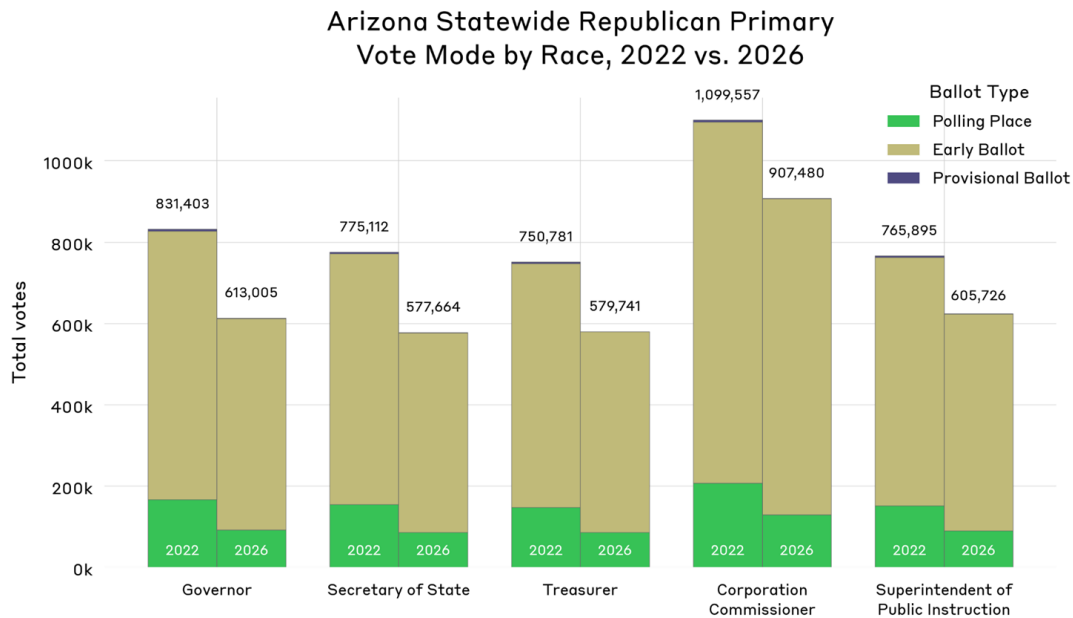
Although Arizona is not a fully [vote-by-mail state](#), the majority of voters do not mark and cast their ballot in-person on Election Day. Rather, early ballots are the most common voting method used by voters. The term “early ballot” refers to ballots cast via mail, ballot drop box, or in-person ballot drop-off. For each election, the Secretary of State’s office publicly reports all three of these voting methods, in aggregate, as early ballot totals for each race (although differences arise at the county level). The Secretary

of State's office does not publish aggregated ballot totals broken down by voting method across all races; only race-specific totals are reported. When examining vote modes in the July 2026 primary election, two data points are used to identify trends in voting modes across races: polling place votes (votes marked and cast in person on Election Day) and early votes.

When analyzing vote mode usage by party in primary elections for statewide offices, slight variations arise between Republican voters and Democratic voters. This July, the Republican Party held contested primaries for the state offices of governor, secretary of state, attorney general, treasurer, superintendent of public instruction, and corporation commissioner. Of these statewide offices, the Democratic Party only held contested primaries for the superintendent of public instruction and corporation commissioner. Across all races, early ballots were the most common voting method used this July. According to data [published by the Secretary of State's office](#), on average, about 86% of all ballots cast in elections for statewide office were returned via mail, ballot drop box, or in-person ballot drop off. When broken out by party affiliation, the data shows that Democratic voters were more likely to cast early ballots in these races than Republican voters. In the Democratic primary elections for superintendent of public instruction, about 92% of votes were cast early, and in the Democratic primary for corporation commissioner, about 93% of votes were cast early. In contrast, an average of 85% of ballots cast in the Republican primaries for statewide office were cast early.

Comparing vote modes across the 2022 and 2026 primary elections can provide helpful insights into voting trends over time. In both years, the Republican Party held primaries for governor, secretary of state, treasurer, superintendent of public instruction, and corporation commissioner. (There was no overlap in the offices on the ballot for the Democratic primaries in 2022 and 2026; that is, each statewide office that was voted on in the 2022 Democratic primary was not voted on in the party's 2026 primary, and vice

versa. Therefore, vote mode comparisons across races for the Democratic Party in these years cannot be made.) Of the five races that were held in the Republican primaries across both years, early ballots accounted for a larger share of total ballots cast in 2026 (85%) than in 2022 (79%). Given that Arizona holds partially closed primaries (meaning that voters registered as Republican and not registered with a recognized party can both participate in Republican primaries) this trend signals a willingness of Republican and independent voters to mark and cast their ballots outside the polling place, despite increasing scrutiny of the practice at the national level.



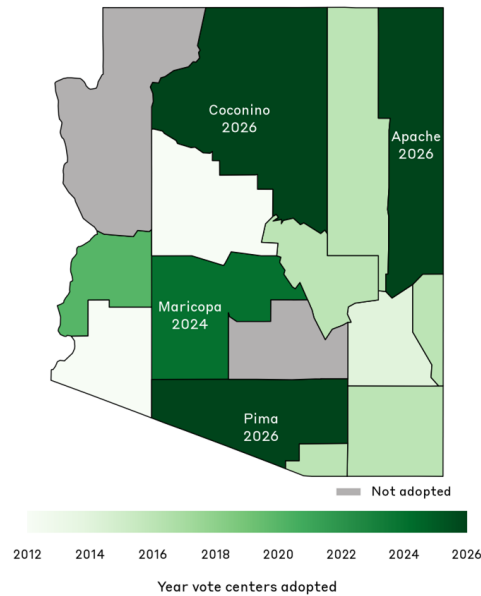
Graph source: MIT Election Data + Science Lab
Data source: Arizona Secretary of State

The figure above depicts a bar graph of the total number of ballots cast in 2022 Republican primaries and 2026 Republican primaries, for the offices of governor, secretary of state, treasurer, corporation commissioner and superintendent of public instruction. Results are broken down by vote type—polling place, early, and provisional ballots. Note: In the race for Corporation Commissioner, voters could select two candidates; therefore, the number of total votes does not correspond to the number of ballots cast in that race.

Throughout the state, the use of provisional ballots was exceedingly rare. Across all races for statewide office, an average of less than .1% of total ballots cast were provisional ballots. In Arizona, there are [two types of provisional ballots](#) that a voter may cast: regular and conditional. Regular provisional ballots are issued when a voter's eligibility or voter registration status needs to be verified by election staff prior to counting the ballot. Conditional provisional ballots are issued when a voter does not have adequate identification to vote a normal ballot in-person on Election Day. In these cases, a voter must return to their voting location, county election office, or city or town clerk's office to provide a valid form of identification. For each type of provisional ballot, a ballot is counted and included in final vote tallies only once these questions are resolved. Ballots belonging to voters whose identity or eligibility cannot be verified are rejected.

Compared with the 2018 and 2022 primary elections, the overall number of provisional ballots cast in races for statewide office has steadily declined. According to election results [published by the Secretary of State's office](#), the average percentage of provisional ballots cast as a share of total ballots in 2018 stood at 1.5%. This figure excludes votes cast in Maricopa County in 2018, due to how the county reported its data. In 2022, [this figure](#) declined to 0.5%, before [reaching less than](#) 0.1% in 2026. Both 2022 and 2026 figures include votes cast in Maricopa County. Several factors may contribute to this decline, including the increased adoption of electronic poll books, which facilitate in-person voter eligibility verification. County adoption of vote centers may also be a contributing factor. Between 2022 and 2026, four Arizona counties adopted vote centers, including the two largest counties in the state, Maricopa and Pima (see figure below). Transitioning to vote centers from precinct-based voting can reduce the number of voters issued a provisional ballot because they went to vote at the wrong precinct.

Progressive Adoption of Vote Centers by Arizona County



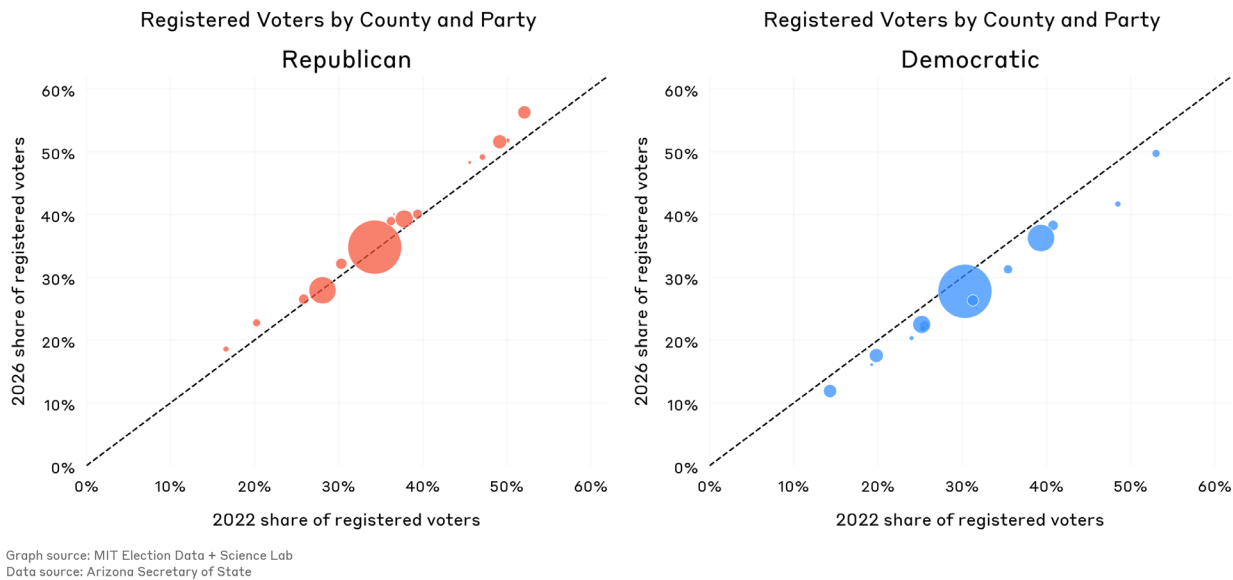
Graph source: MIT Election Data + Science Lab
Data source: Anita Manion, David Kimball, and Jake Shaw

The figure above depicts a county-level map of Arizona shaded by the progression of vote center adoption throughout the state. The color scale ranges from light to dark green, with light green indicating earlier adoption, and dark green indicating more recent adoption. Counties shaded in gray do not use vote centers. Data are from research by Manion, Kimball, and Shaw, and are available [here](#).

Voter Registration

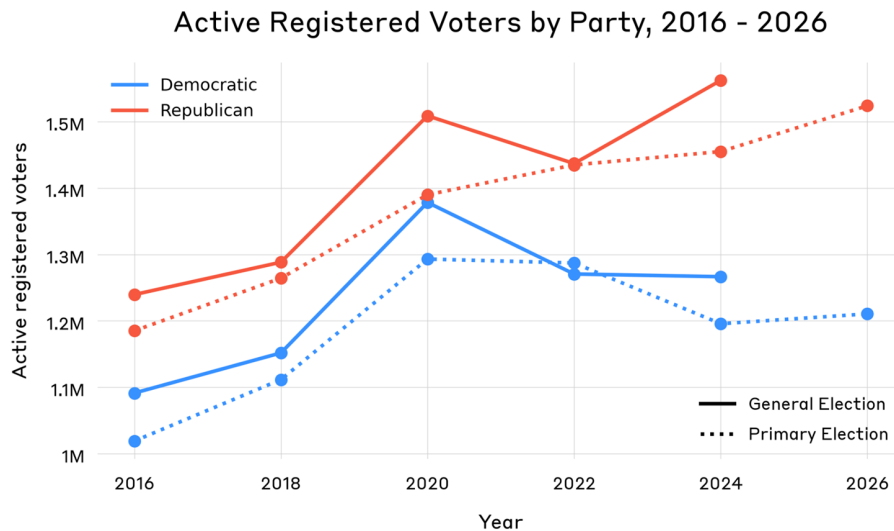
Changes in Voters Registered as Democrat and Republican

Between the 2022 primary election and the July 2026 statewide primary, the total number of active registered voters increased by approximately 150,000 voters, or 3.6%. Growth in the number of active registered Republicans was a significant driving force. During this period, Republican voter registration grew by about 6%, while the number of active registered Democrats declined by around 6% (see figure below).



The figures above compare the 2026 share of voters who registered as Republican / Democrat at the time of the July primary with the 2022 share at the time of the August primary. Each point represents one county, with the dotted line indicating where these points would fall if there were no change from 2022.

While the Republican party has strengthened its position in the state since 2020, the number of active voters registered as Democrats remains below 2020 figures. In the 2020 primary election, Democratic registration in the state stood at 1,293,074 voters compared to 1,210,510 voters in the 2026 primary election (-82,564 voters). Prior to 2020, Democratic registration in the state grew significantly, before entering a period of decline. Given that Arizona is widely considered a [swing state in presidential elections](#), Republican gains in the state may carry implications for the outcome of future presidential elections.

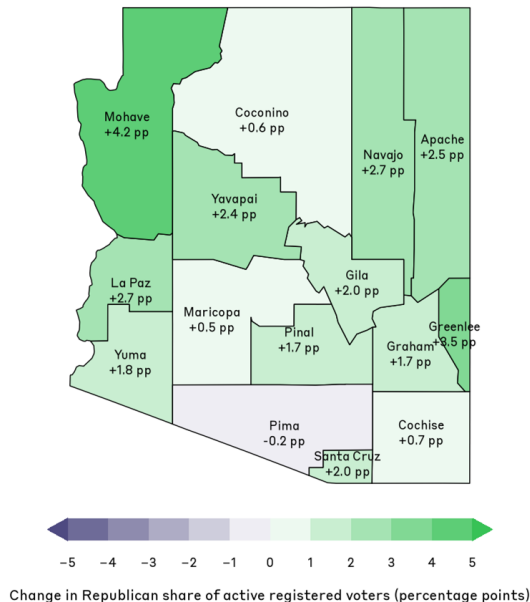


Graph source: MIT Election Data + Science Lab
Data source: Arizona Secretary of State

The figure above depicts a line graph showing the number of Republican and Democratic registrants in every statewide primary and general election since 2016. The red line represents Republicans, and the blue line represents Democrats. Solid lines represent registrants at the time of the general election, while dotted lines represent registrants at the time of the statewide primary.

Between the 2022 and 2026 primary elections, growth in the Republican share of active registered voters was most prominent in Mohave (+4.2 pp), Greenlee (+3.5 pp), La Paz (+2.7 pp), and Navajo (+2.7 pp) counties. Compared to the period between 2018 and 2022, the increase in registered Republican voters in the past four years has slowed in all four counties.

Change in Republican Share of Active Registered Voters 2022–2026 Primary Elections



Graph source: MIT Election Data + Science Lab
Data source: Arizona Secretary of State

The figure above depicts a county-level map of Arizona shaded by the change in the overall share of Republican registrants in Arizona between the 2022 primary and 2026 primary elections. The color scale ranges from purple to green, with purple indicating a decrease in the share of registrants, and green indicating an increase. The darker the color appears, the larger the increase or decrease is.

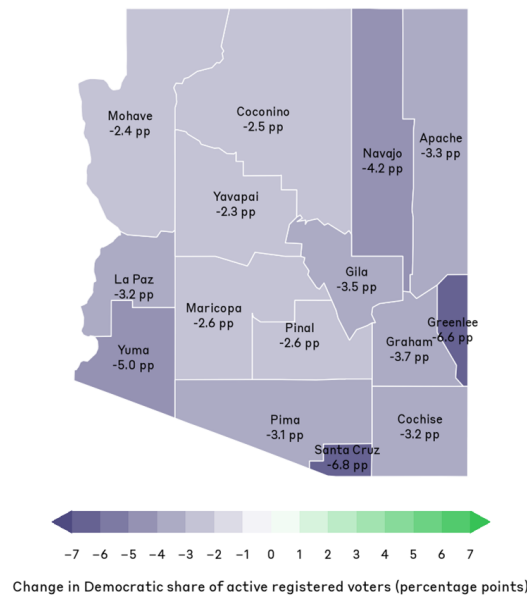
Declines in active registered Democrats in Arizona were largest in Santa Cruz (-6.8 pp), Greenlee (-6.6 pp), Yuma (-5.0 pp), and Navajo (-4.2 pp) counties. While Democratic registration remains above 2016 levels, declines in these counties are part of an ongoing trend that has accelerated in many counties since 2020. For example, between the 2020 and 2022 primary elections, Democratic registrants in Santa Cruz County decreased by -2.2 pp, compared to -6.8 pp between the 2022 and 2026 primary elections.

The Democratic Party has also witnessed declines in active registered voters in the counties that are home to the state's two largest cities—Maricopa (Phoenix) and Pima

(Tucson)—for the first time since before 2016. If the trend continues, it may have implications for the 2028 presidential election, given that Maricopa County played a pivotal role in the 2024 election.

Maricopa has also become a target of President Trump’s unfounded claims of election fraud, and more recently, DOJ probes into how its elections are administered, including the [dispatch of election monitors](#) to the county during the 2026 primary. Tighter vote margins in future elections would likely increase the already-heightened scrutiny of election administration in Maricopa County and the state as a whole.

Change in Democratic Share of Active Registered Voters
2022–2026 Primary Elections

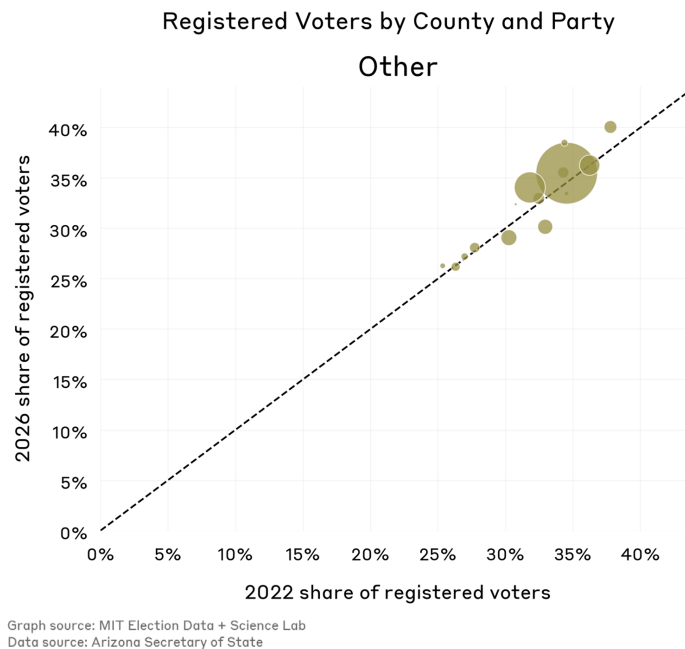


Graph source: MIT Election Data + Science Lab
Data source: Arizona Secretary of State

The figure above depicts a county-level map of Arizona shaded by the change in the overall share of Democratic registrants in Arizona between the 2022 primary and 2026 primary elections. The color scale ranges from purple to green, with purple indicating a decrease in the share of registrants, and green indicating an increase in the share of registrants. The darker the color appears, the larger the increase or decrease is.

Changes in Voters Registered as Other

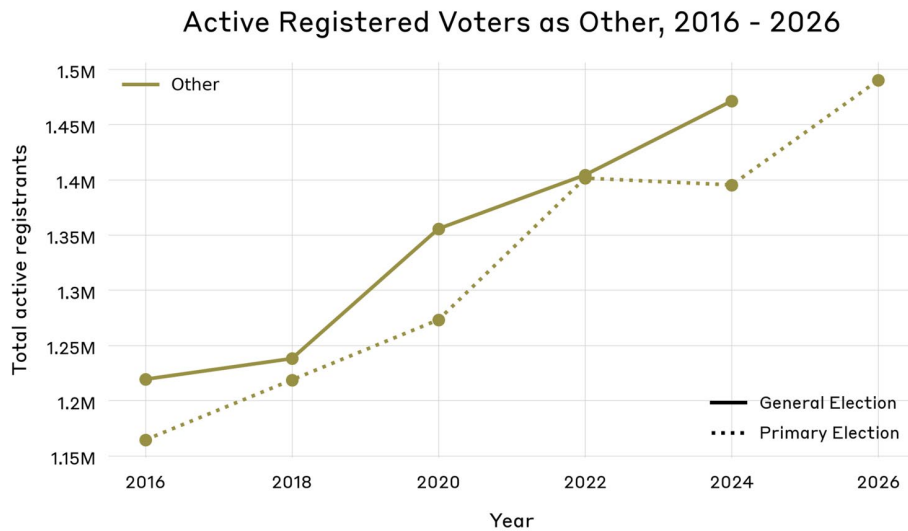
During this period, the number of active voters registered as Other—meaning that these voters are not registered with a recognized political party—has also grown significantly, surpassing the total number of registered Democrats in the state. More specifically, at the time of the 2024 general election, there were approximately 1,471,309 voters registered as “other” in Arizona. By July 2026, this number had grown to [about 1,490,185](#), or 34.6% of the state’s total registered active voters.



The figures above compare the 2026 share of voters who registered as Other at the time of the July primary with the 2022 share at the time of the August primary. Each point represents one county, with the dotted line indicating where these points would fall if there were no change from 2022.

Recent growth in the number of voters registered as Other is part of a long-standing trend in Arizona. Since 2016, the overall number of voters registered as Other in Arizona has increased by about 28%, or 338,863 voters (see figure below). Growth in the share of voters registered as Other was the strongest between the 2020 and 2022 primary elections, when it grew by 10.1%. The only period of negative growth between statewide

primaries within the last 10 years was between the 2022 and 2024 primary elections, where the growth rate stood at $-.44\%$; however, growth quickly resumed. Between the 2024 and 2026 primary elections, the number of voters registered as Other grew by 6.8% . Arizona is not the only state experiencing this growth in unaffiliated voters; other states such as North Carolina have seen similar trends in recent years. (More information on North Carolina's unaffiliated voters can be found in the [North Carolina 2026 Report](#).)

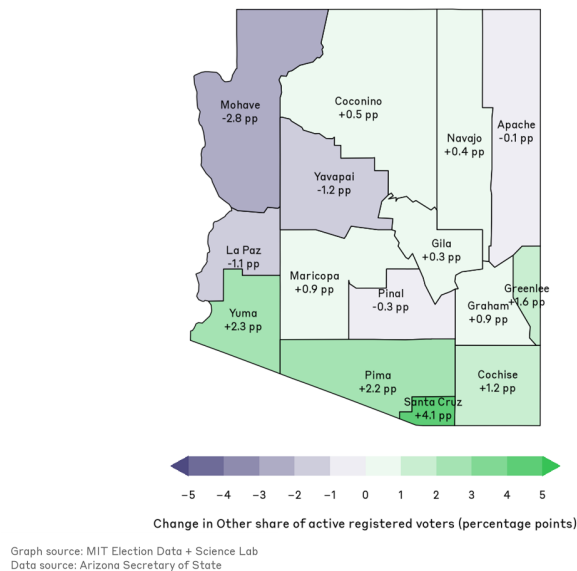


Graph source: MIT Election Data + Science Lab
Data source: Arizona Secretary of State

The figure above depicts a line graph showing the number of voters registered as Other in every statewide primary and general election since 2016. Solid lines represent registrants at the time of the general election while dotted lines represent registrants at the time of the statewide primary.

Growth in the share of voters registered as Other between the 2022 and 2026 primary elections was strongest in Santa Cruz (+4.1 pp), Pima (+2.2 pp), and Yuma (+2.3 pp) counties. During this period, both Santa Cruz and Pima experienced declines in voters registered as Democrats and increases in voters registered as Republicans. However, several counties did experience a decline in voters registered as Other; those declines were strongest in Mohave (-2.8 pp) and La Paz (-1.1 pp) counties.

Change in Other Share of Active Registered Voters 2022–2026 Primary Elections



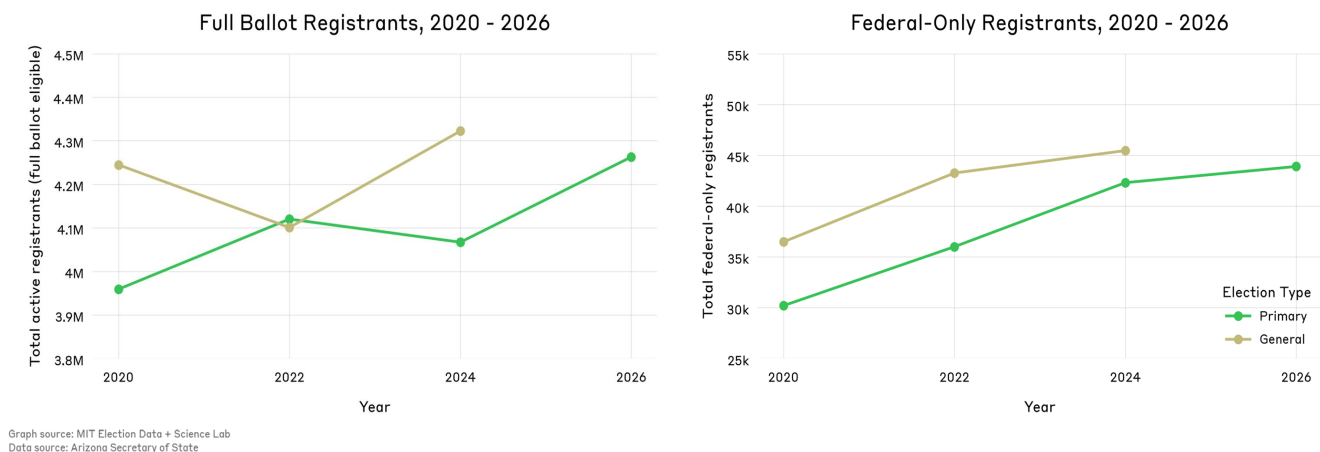
The figure above depicts a county-level map of Arizona shaded by the change in the overall share of voters registered as Other in Arizona between the 2022 primary and 2026 primary elections. The color scale ranges from purple to green, with purple indicating a larger decrease in the share of registrants, and green indicating a larger increase in the share of registrants.

Growth in the share of voters registered as Other can significantly impact the outcomes of future primary elections in the state. Arizona holds primaries that are [open to unaffiliated voters](#), meaning that voters registered as Other are allowed to vote in the primary of their choice. Given that [research suggests](#) that unaffiliated registrants fall between registered Democrats and Republicans ideologically, on average, their ability to participate in the primary of their choosing makes this group increasingly decisive in a state like Arizona, where tight margins are common.

Changes in Federal-Only Registrants

Arizona has maintained a bifurcated voter registration system since [2013](#) to comply with the differing requirements of state and federal law. The system allows voters to submit DPOC, which allows them to vote in state and local elections as well as federal

contests; those that do not provide DPOC are authorized to vote only in federal elections and are categorized as “federal-only” by the Secretary of State’s office. Since 2020, Arizona has experienced a gradual but significant increase in the number of federal-only registrants in the state. At the time of the July 2026 primary, there were 43,894 federal-only registrants, constituting 1% of the state’s total registered voters (see figure below). This is a sizable increase over 2020, when there were just over 30,000 federal-only registered voters (constituting 0.76% of total registered voters).

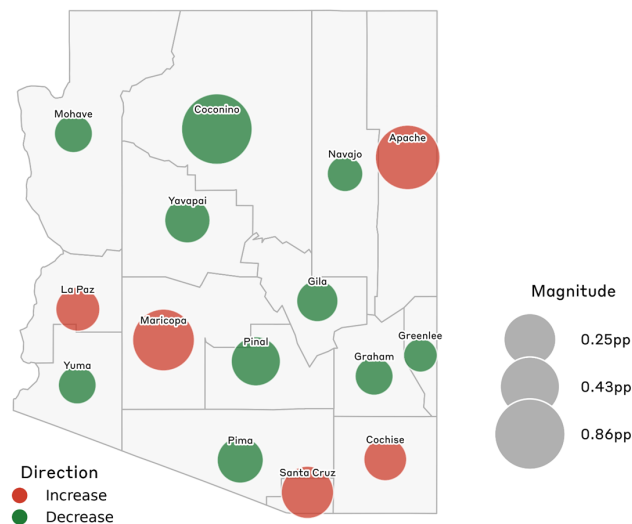


The figure above shows the number of active registered voters in Arizona between the August 2020 and July 2026 primary elections that were eligible to cast a full ballot, including races for federal, state, and local office (left) and those that were eligible to vote in federal elections only (right).

During this period, the number of federal-only voters grew most quickly between 2020 and 2024; while it continued to grow between 2024 and the July 2026 primary election, it has done so at a slower pace. This growth may be attributed to several factors. Arizona has experienced [significant population growth](#) in recent years, particularly in Maricopa and Pinal counties. As such, growth in the raw number of federal-only registrants could, in part, reflect population growth, but this does not explain the growing share of these

voters relative to total registered voters. The state’s largest period of growth in federal-only registrants was between the 2020 and 2022 general elections. During this period, the state Legislature passed two laws, [House Bill 2492](#) (2022) and [House Bill 2243](#) (2022). The citizenship and residency verification requirements established in these bills, along with new procedures for investigating voters' citizenship and canceling registrations (as discussed in the section [Documentary Proof of Citizenship Litigation](#)), may have also contributed to an increase in federal-only voters.

Change in Federal-Only Share of Registrants by County
July 2020 - July 2026 Primary Elections



Graph source: MIT Election Data + Science Lab
Data source: Arizona Secretary of State

The figure above depicts a county-level map of Arizona with bubbles in each county representing an increase or decrease in the share of federal-only registrants in that county. A larger red bubble indicates a greater increase in the share of federal-only registrants while a larger green bubble indicates a greater decrease.

Demographically, federal-only registrants are disproportionately younger and clustered around college campuses. An analysis of statewide voter registration files [conducted by Votebeat](#) in 2023 found that voters aged 18-24 were, in fact, three times more likely to be

registered as federal-only than voters over the age of 24. These voters were also clustered around college campuses—only two precincts in the state had more than 1,000 federal-only voters. One of these precincts is in Tucson, which is home to the University of Arizona, and the other is in Tempe, home to Arizona State University. When interviewed by Votebeat, one professor at Northern Arizona University [pointed out](#) that otherwise eligible out-of-state students face more difficulties meeting the documentation requirement to become full ballot voters. As a [growing number of states seek to institute DPOC requirements](#) for voter registration, it will be important for lawmakers to consider the potential adverse impacts of these requirements on younger voters.

When conducting an analysis of the August 2026 Arizona voter file, we found that federal-only voters continued to skew younger heading into the primary election. According to the voter file, 44,973 registrants were federal-only voters, or 0.90% of all registered voters. Consistent with the 2023 Votebeat analysis, voters aged 18-24 were 3.2 times more likely to be registered as federal-only than voters over the age of 24. Furthermore, our analysis showed that federal-only voters are much less likely to vote than all other registrants. For instance, in the 2024 presidential election, only 0.07% of voters were federal-only, despite their consisting of nearly one percent of all registrants. In the 2026 primary, only 676 federal-only registrants voted, which was 0.06% of all voters.

We created an interactive map of the location of federal-only voters in the 2026 primary by ZIP Code, available at [this link](#).

Election Reporting Timelines

The Arizona [Secretary of State's website](#) provides detailed information regarding post-election procedures, including vote counting and canvassing deadlines. Election results reporting timelines for the 2026 general election on November 3 are as follows:

Date	Description
October 7	Counties begin processing and tabulating early ballots. + Early ballot totals not published until election night.
November 3 – 7 p.m.	Polls close. Mail and UOCAVA ballot receipt deadline.
November 3 – 8 p.m.	Counties report first batch of results. + The first release consists primarily of early votes. Election Day votes reports generally arrive later.
November 4 – 7 p.m.	Hand-count audit begins. + Hand-count audit occurs within 24 hours of the close of polls on Election Day. - For ballots cast at polling places, ballots from at least 2% of precincts, or 2 precincts (whichever is greater) are audited. - For early ballots, at least 1% of early (mail) ballots, or 5,000 ballots (whichever is less) are selected for auditing. + If the hand-count differs from electronically tabulated totals by a “ designated margin ,” additional hand count audits may occur.
November 8	Deadline for voters to verify their identity for a conditional provisional ballot or if a ballot signature issue occurred.

	+ Conditional provisional ballots are issued to in-person voters if they did not provide sufficient ID to vote at the polls.
November 9	First day for counties to canvass election returns.
November 19	Deadline for Board of Supervisors to canvass election returns.
November 23	Election Official statewide canvass of election returns.