

St. Tammany Parish Guide to the 2010 Fall Elections

This guide has been put together to assist the voters of St. Tammany Parish for the Fall election schedule. Recent changes in Election laws have resulted in new procedures and voting practices. Here are some important matters regarding voting this Fall.

Registration Deadlines: In order to participate, you must register 30 days prior to an election to qualify. If you have registered at a Public assistance agency, Office of Motor Vehicles or by mail and have not received a voter card, please contact the Registrar's office before the deadline to assure that you will be eligible to vote.

Online Registration: Online registration is now offered for new applicants and voters that need to make changes to their voter registration record. More information and instructions are available at the following link:
<http://www.sos.louisiana.gov/OnlineVoterRegistrationOVR/tabid/955/Default.aspx>

Early and Absentee Voting: There are currently two options for early voting: In-person and by mail. **In-Person voting** is open to all voters in the Parish. No excuse is needed to vote during the early period. **Mail voting** has certain requirements to participate. A signed request is required with a valid reason for requesting ballots for this method of voting. Any voter that has attained the age of 65 may request ballots by mail and that request will be honored for all elections that the voter meets eligibility. A mail ballot request form may be requested by phone or downloaded from <http://www.stprov.org> - Voting Forms. Requirements are listed as well as instructions for use.

Closed Party Elections: Act 560 of the 2006 Legislative Session (18:1275.1-1280) created the closed party primary system for **Congress only**.

A closed congressional 1st party primary and 2nd party primary, **if necessary**, is held for recognized parties to nominate their candidates for the general election. These elections are held eight weeks and four weeks, respectively before the general election. Louisiana has five recognized parties: Democratic, Green, Libertarian, Reform and Republican.

A voter registered with a recognized party may only vote in that party's primary. For example, a registered Democrat may only vote in a Democratic 1st party or 2nd party primary; a registered Green may only vote in a Green 1st party or 2nd party primary; a registered Libertarian may only vote in a Libertarian 1st party or 2nd party primary; a registered Reform may only vote in a Reform 1st party or 2nd party primary; and a registered Republican may only vote in a Republican 1st party or 2nd party primary.

All **unaffiliated voters**, those who are registered with a non-recognized political party OR registered with no party, may vote in ANY 1st party or 2nd party primary, **UNLESS** the recognized party has closed its primary.

The state central committee of each recognized party is required to give written notice to the secretary of state no later than January 1 of the year of the election if its rules and regulations prohibit unaffiliated voters from participating in its primary election, which remains effective until the party notifies the secretary of state in writing of a change.

As of 2008, the Republican Party has filed written notice with the secretary of state that its rules prohibit unaffiliated voters from participating in the Republican Party primary election. Therefore, **ONLY** registered Republican voters may vote in a Republican 1st party and 2nd party primary.

ALL VOTERS, regardless of party affiliation or lack of party affiliation may vote in the congressional general election.

Election Schedule: There are three elections this fall. Qualifying for those elections starts July 7th thru the 9th. Candidate information will be available after that event on the Secretary of State's web page, <http://www.sos.louisiana.gov/> under elections.

August 28, 2010: The 1st Party Primary for Congress (Poll hours 6am-8pm)(Closed 1st Party Primary Election)

U.S. Representative, 1st Congressional District, U.S. Senator

October 2, 2010: State Primary Election (Poll hours 6am-8pm) (Closed 2nd Party Primary for Congress)

U.S. Representative, 1st Congressional District, U.S. Senator / School Board, Town of Abita Springs, Village of Folsom, Town of Pearl River

November 2, 2010 General Election (Poll hours 6am-8pm) Open General