



State of New Mexico
Office of the Secretary of State

GOOD QUESTIONS

About The 2026 Election

VOTERS ASK US THINGS.

Who counts my vote? How does anybody know the count is right? Is the count audited?

These are all good questions. They have real answers, and none of them are complicated. Follow along to see how a ballot makes it from your voting booth to the official election results.

FOLLOW ONE BALLOT

1 YOU MARK YOUR BALLOT ON PAPER BY HAND.

New Mexico uses hand-marked paper ballots without exception.

2 A TABULATOR READS IT.

Your ballot is scanned on an optical scan tabulator. The paper original is kept.

3 THE TABULATOR MACHINES ARE TESTED BEFORE THE ELECTION.

Before every election, the tabulators run real paper ballots with a known result to confirm they count correctly.

4 COUNTY STAFF CANVASS THE RESULTS.

Canvass means a formal review of the vote count. The canvass is run by your local county clerk's office.

5 A DIFFERENT TEAM AT THE STATE LEVEL CANVASSES THE RESULTS AGAIN.

A new set of staff at the Secretary of State's Office reviews the same results a second time.

6 AN INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR AUDITS THE RESULTS AGAIN.

Someone outside of the election process checks the numbers a third time before they go to the State Canvass Board to be made official.

7 PEOPLE COUNT THE BALLOTS BY HAND.

After every statewide election, New Mexico runs a risk-limiting audit. Precincts are picked at random and those paper ballots are counted by hand. The hand count is compared to the machine count.

WHY A PAPER BALLOT MATTERS

Paper lets us check the machines. It also means we can recount a single race, or an entire election, if needed.

Every independent post-election audit conducted in New Mexico since 2004 is available to download here.

SCAN TO LEARN MORE



MORE GOOD QUESTIONS.

WHO ACTUALLY RUNS THE ELECTION?

People from your county. New Mexico runs elections county by county. The Secretary of State's Office oversees elections statewide, and the voting equipment is the same in every county.

ARE THE COUNTING MACHINES CONNECTED TO THE INTERNET?

No. Law and procedure keep tabulators off the internet and off any computer network. The same goes for the systems that total votes at the county level.

CAN NONCITIZENS VOTE IN NEW MEXICO?

No. You must be registered in order to vote in New Mexico. Every person who registers to vote in New Mexico must attest that they are 18 years old (or will be so by the next election), a citizen of the U.S., and a resident of New Mexico. A full social security number is also required to register to vote in this state.

HOW DO YOU PREVENT SOMEONE FROM VOTING TWICE?

New Mexico's election administrators not only follow all state and federal guidelines to keep our voter rolls clean and up-to-date, but go above and beyond those requirements. And although no one can know how you voted, county clerks and poll workers access real time data from electronic poll books at voting locations, so that if a voter has voted they are not permitted to vote again in an election.

WHY DO THE NUMBERS CHANGE AFTER ELECTION NIGHT?

Election night results are unofficial. Counting every vote and meeting the state's auditing requirements can't be done in a single day. Results remain unofficial until the state canvassing board certifies the election.



Still have a question? **Good!**

We've collected 35 of the most common voter questions here

Your local County Clerk's office can answer anything about your specific situation. **OR REACH US AT 1-800-477-3632.**