

CHAPTER 7
Missouri Elections



Governor Guy Park with Blue Ribbon Baby Contest Winners, Missouri State Fair, 1933.

(Missouri State Archives, State Fair Collection)



Missouri

Voting and Elections

Who Registers to Vote in Missouri?

Citizens living in Missouri must register in order to vote. Any U.S. citizen 17 years and 6 months of age or older, if a Missouri resident, may register and vote except:

- A person who is adjudged incapacitated
- A person who is confined under sentence of imprisonment
- A person who is on probation or parole after conviction of a felony until finally discharged
- A person after conviction of a felony or misdemeanor connected with the right of suffrage (RSMo 115.133)

How do Missourians Register?

Qualified citizens may register in person at the office of their local election authority, by mail, at the driver's license fee office or at participating state agencies. Registration in person is accomplished by filling out registration forms with information on identity, residence and qualifications which are signed and sworn to, then witnessed by the election authority or a designee. (RSMo 115.155)

Registration by mail, at the driver's license fee office or at the participating state agencies requires submission of an application stating qualifications. A verification or rejection of registration is sent by the election authority within seven working days. (RSMo 115.159)

When do Missourians Register?

An unregistered citizen may register to vote whenever local election officials' places of business are open, by requesting an application by mail from the election authority, when renewing a Missouri driver's license or when receiving services from a participating state agency. Special registration sites and dates may be utilized prior to major elections.

The deadline for registration is the fourth Wednesday prior to an election. New Missouri residents may register immediately.

When do Missourians Vote?

In addition to certain special and emergency dates, there are six official election dates in Missouri:

The statutes require that all public elections be held on the general election day, the primary election day, the general municipal election day, the first Tuesday after the first Monday in February or November, or on another day expressly provided by city or county charter, the first Tuesday after the first Monday in June and in nonprimary years on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in August. (RSMo 115.123.1)

The general election day is the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November in even-numbered years. The primary election day is the first Tuesday after the first Monday in August in even-numbered years. (RSMo 115.121 (1 & 2))

Elections for cities, towns, villages, school boards and special district officers are held the first Tuesday in April each year, known as "general municipal election day." (RSMo 115.121.3)

A statewide presidential preference primary shall be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in February of each presidential election year. (RSMo 115.755)

Who Conducts Registration and Elections?

Voter registration and the conduct of elections are the responsibilities of boards of election commissioners in the counties of Clay, Jackson, Platte and St. Louis and in the cities of Kansas City and St. Louis. One county, St. Charles, has a director of elections while the county clerk serves as the election authority in all other counties of the state.

Special Voting Provisions

Handicapped voters and persons prevented from voting because of absence or illness may vote absentee. Persons with permanent disabilities may apply for permanent absentee ballot status by making application with the local election authority and providing a physician's statement as required by law. (RSMo 115.284) Curbside voting is permitted in Missouri, or voters may be transferred to more accessible precincts. Local election officials should be contacted about absentee federal service balloting or "new resident" ballots for residents who arrive after the registration deadline.

When voting, Missourians must show an approved form of identification. (RSMo 115.427)

Elections and Political Parties

Missourians do not register under party affiliation. Hence, at primary elections, voters may choose which “established party” they vote within. Party nominee—and independent candidates—are then listed on the general election ballot.

There are presently three “established political parties” statewide—the Democratic, Republican and Libertarian parties. Persons may seek the nomination of these parties for any elective office from the county level and above. In order to become “established”, a party must have received more than two percent of the votes cast statewide for at least one of its candidates. New parties are formed by petition and may exist on the county, district or state level. They must meet the same standard as any other party to remain “established.”

In addition to the three statewide established parties, the Green and Progressive parties are also active in some regions of the state.

At the time of primary elections, voters select county committee members of established parties in Missouri. Those committee people, thus elected, have certain duties and responsibilities. They serve, as appropriate, as members of legislative, senatorial, judicial, and congressional district committees. County, district, or state committee members may be called on to fill candidate vacancies on party ballots or to select nominees for special elections from time to time. The state committees are selected, indirectly, by local committee persons. The state committees become especially important when delegates to presidential nominating (national) conventions are being selected.

Registered voters in Missouri, 1996–2002

County	1996	1998	2000	2002	County	1996	1998	2000	2002
Adair	18,303	18,298	16,333	18,467	Macon	10,269	10,251	10,719	10,261
Andrew	9,984	10,043	10,529	10,523	Madison	8,835	9,200	9,724	9,378
Atchison	4,170	4,498	5,041	4,914	Maries	6,141	6,552	6,532	6,622
Audrain	14,769	16,044	16,636	16,329	Marion	17,206	18,286	19,277	19,921
Barry	18,270	19,292	20,747	21,399	McDonald	12,812	14,097	14,405	12,933
Barton	7,462	7,835	8,580	9,204	Mercer	2,717	2,412	2,798	2,828
Bates	11,221	11,190	11,915	10,948	Miller	14,012	14,706	15,889	16,315
Benton	10,644	11,096	12,213	13,055	Mississippi	9,138	10,894	10,648	9,898
Bollinger	8,454	9,019	9,125	9,535	Moniteau	8,262	8,543	9,104	9,233
Boone	95,794	96,845	106,671	93,722	Monroe	5,912	6,131	6,410	6,291
Buchanan	49,500	53,685	54,175	54,358	Montgomery	7,321	8,092	8,448	8,031
Butler	30,356	32,001	34,188	35,318	Morgan	11,315	12,191	12,866	12,425
Caldwell	6,415	6,561	6,802	6,109	New Madrid	12,429	11,764	12,793	11,507
Callaway	21,013	22,537	24,716	23,874	Newton	31,112	35,012	37,616	39,684
Camden	20,114	24,246	26,896	28,400	Nodaway	13,500	12,620	13,710	12,899
Cape Girardeau	41,280	44,266	47,943	42,017	Oregon	6,300	6,877	6,735	6,907
Carroll	7,611	7,800	7,978	7,328	Osage	8,191	8,360	8,750	8,719
Carter	4,591	5,044	4,815	5,082	Ozark	7,414	7,531	7,670	7,078
Cass	45,310	45,950	57,502	62,000	Pemiscot	15,285	16,064	16,309	16,855
Cedar	9,924	10,586	9,728	10,266	Perry	10,340	10,654	11,458	11,975
Chariton	7,117	7,296	7,017	6,881	Pettis	24,861	23,965	25,175	25,433
Christian	31,000	36,795	37,848	48,080	Phelps	24,519	25,290	23,642	23,906
Clark	5,813	4,740	4,978	5,098	Pike	10,541	11,319	11,885	11,130
Clay	106,070	117,438	125,805	104,613	Platte	43,000	47,811	57,069	55,025
Clinton	11,995	12,851	13,589	14,741	Polk	13,286	18,072	19,231	15,108
Cole	45,029	47,042	47,898	49,463	Pulaski	16,135	17,877	19,205	20,983
Cooper	10,067	10,299	10,802	10,448	Putnam	3,610	3,907	4,129	4,044
Crawford	14,559	15,620	15,865	17,237	Ralls	6,744	7,394	7,324	7,400
Dade	4,992	5,393	5,893	6,108	Randolph	15,346	16,326	16,694	16,498
Dallas	8,620	8,747	9,551	9,864	Ray	14,429	16,638	16,171	17,022
Daviess	6,196	4,929	4,982	5,416	Reynolds	6,224	6,563	6,870	6,888
DeKalb	5,859	5,708	5,699	6,110	Ripley	9,430	9,277	9,785	10,208
Dent	10,140	10,119	10,248	7,580	St. Charles	138,397	166,226	186,710	172,524
Douglas	9,406	9,400	9,701	9,884	St. Clair	6,169	6,593	6,946	6,512
Dunklin	19,703	21,121	22,444	23,510	St. Francois	33,345	34,858	38,277	37,637
Franklin	52,966	56,953	61,893	61,937	St. Louis	629,388	704,907	726,325	618,149
Gasconade	9,871	10,034	10,648	10,266	Ste. Genevieve	10,605	10,526	11,184	11,029
Gentry	4,975	5,075	5,219	5,228	Saline	16,534	17,445	18,160	17,939
Greene	151,393	164,593	176,428	177,209	Schuyler	3,071	3,284	3,365	3,516
Grundy	7,014	7,164	7,178	6,276	Scotland	3,370	3,224	3,273	3,306
Harrison	6,438	6,405	6,281	6,483	Scott	24,504	26,597	26,520	26,154
Henry	15,048	15,627	16,617	16,053	Shannon	5,675	6,379	6,452	6,787
Hickory	5,947	6,057	6,337	6,137	Shelby	4,728	4,882	4,815	4,591
Holt	4,384	4,499	4,427	4,477	Stoddard	18,861	19,748	20,472	21,377
Howard	7,500	6,520	7,369	7,400	Stone	17,229	19,548	20,474	22,906
Howell	22,228	24,125	25,272	19,828	Sullivan	5,100	4,909	5,038	5,214
Iron	7,037	6,745	7,011	6,646	Taney	25,265	26,318	26,973	30,623
Jackson	190,183	202,654	215,574	202,229	Texas	14,146	14,697	15,463	14,981
Jasper	55,515	62,572	67,251	72,656	Vernon	11,552	12,397	13,348	11,631
Jefferson	108,401	118,280	129,889	111,352	Warren	14,188	14,927	16,814	17,343
Johnson	23,527	26,153	28,367	22,953	Washington	13,369	14,731	14,603	15,876
Knox	3,299	3,258	3,143	3,215	Wayne	9,724	10,093	10,495	9,278
Laclede	17,993	19,262	20,126	20,733	Webster	16,878	17,649	19,417	20,092
Lafayette	21,137	20,087	21,177	20,522	Worth	1,787	1,882	1,840	2,206
Lawrence	18,953	20,747	21,931	22,787	Wright	10,910	11,683	11,399	12,628
Lewis	6,361	6,376	6,366	6,951	Kansas City	207,087	221,610	230,052	276,694
Lincoln	19,670	22,263	24,764	27,554	St. Louis City	<u>183,097</u>	<u>216,650</u>	<u>244,995</u>	<u>193,274</u>
Linn	10,746	10,276	10,532	9,605					
Livingston	8,897	9,493	9,568	9,794	Totals	3,342,849	3,635,991	3,860,672	3,681,844

2004 Missouri Election Calendar

Official Election Day	Style of Election	Last Day to Register to Vote	First Day for Candidate Filing	Last Day for Candidate Filing	Final Certification Date
February 3, 2004	Available for public election	January 7, 2004	October 14, 2003 (Jurisdictions in Kansas City begin filing October 21, 2003)	November 18, 2003	November 25, 2003
February 3, 2004	Presidential Primary	January 7, 2004	October 21, 2003	November 18, 2003	November 25, 2003
March 2, 2004 (see charter)	Charter cities and charter counties ONLY	February 4, 2004	November 11, 2003 (Jurisdictions in Kansas City begin filing November 18, 2003)	December 16, 2003	December 23, 2003
April 6, 2004	General Municipal Election Day	March 10, 2004	December 16, 2003 (Jurisdictions in Kansas City begin filing December 23, 2003)	January 20, 2004	January 27, 2004
June 8, 2004	Available for public elections	May 12, 2004	February 17, 2004 (Jurisdictions in Kansas City begin filing February 24, 2004)	March 23, 2004	March 30, 2004
August 3, 2004	Primary Election	July 7, 2004	February 24, 2004	March 30, 2004	May 25, 2004
November 2, 2004	General Election	October 6, 2004	July 13, 2004* (Jurisdictions in Kansas City begin filing July 20, 2004)	August 17, 2004**	August 24, 2004

*Opening of filing for jurisdictions other than state and counties that are electing officers.

The final date for new party and independent candidates to submit their petitions to the Secretary of State is **5:00 p.m., July 26, 2004. Independent candidates for **county offices** and those wishing to form a **new party within a county** must submit their petition to the **local election authority (county clerk or election board)** by 5:00 p.m., July 26, 2004. (§115.329.1, RSMo 2000)