



Media Guide: June 16, 2026 Primary and Special Elections



The District of Columbia Board of Elections (DCBOE) strives to be transparent, to provide accurate election information, and to answer questions about the election process from all media representatives. This guide outlines important information for the media for the June 16, 2026 Primary and Special Elections.

In this guide, you will find:

- DCBOE Contact Information
- Key Election Dates and Deadlines
- Election Day Media Coverage Information
- Ranked Choice Voting Overview
- Election Results Reporting: What You Need to Know
 - Election Night
 - Cadence of Subsequent Updates
 - FAQs
- Helpful Links
- Vote Center Media guidelines (attachment)

Main Media Contacts:

General Questions: DCBOE's main office line, (202) 727-2525.

Media contact: Sarah Graham, sgraham@dcboe.org or (202) 235-4310 (text or call)

Social media: @vote4dc on X, Instagram, and Facebook

Website: www.dcboe.org

Key Election Dates and Deadlines:

- These dates are outlined on our Election Calendars available here:
<https://www.dcboe.org/elections/2026-elections>.
- Review DCBOE news releases at www.dcboe.org/news for additional information.

Friday, May 22, 2026 – Tuesday, June 16, 2026 at 8:00 pm

- 55 Mail Ballot Drop Boxes are open 24 hours a day until June 16, 2026 at 8:00 pm.
- Dropboxes are located in all Wards in DC, and locations can be found on our website at www.dcboe.org.

Monday, June 8, 2026 – Sunday, June 14, 2026 —EARLY VOTING

- 25 Early Voting Vote Centers will be open from 8:30 am – 7:00 pm.

Saturday, June 13, 2026

- This is the deadline for receipt of military and overseas voter ballot requests.
- Requests for ballots must be received by 4:45 pm.

Tuesday, June 16, 2026 – ELECTION DAY — LAST DAY TO VOTE!

- 75 Vote Centers will be open from 7:00 am – 8:00 pm.
- All ballots sent via the US Postal Service must be postmarked by Tuesday, June 16, 2026 and received by Friday, June 26, 2026 to be counted.
- The US Postal Service recently clarified its postmarking procedure to indicate that mail is not always postmarked the day it is collected. DCBOE encourages voters to mail their ballots early or to request a hand-stamped postmark at a post office location.

Friday, June 26, 2026:

- Deadline for the receipt of all mailed ballots

(Tentative) Thursday, July 9, 2026:

- The public manual audit of Special Election results begins

(Tentative) Thursday, July 16, 2026:

- DCBOE publishes the results of the public manual audit of the Special Election

(Tentative) Friday, July 17, 2026:

- Certification of Primary and Special Elections results

Election Day Media Coverage:

- Gary Thompson, DCBOE’s Board Chairman, can be made available for interviews during Early Voting, on Election Day, and post-Election Day. **The media are strongly encouraged to submit interview requests as early as possible to ensure optimal availability.**
- For media inquiries and interview requests, contact Sarah Graham at sgraham@dcboe.org or (202) 235-4310 (cell). You may also email communications@dcboe.org.
- Election Day updates, including results, will be posted on DCBOE’s social media and website. Follow @vote4dc on X, Instagram, and Facebook. You may also call DCBOE at (202) 727-2525 or check www.dcboe.org for updates.
- To be included on the Election Results email list, fill out this form: <https://forms.gle/Mca7dtLednkGwCk17> or email Sarah Graham at sgraham@dcboe.org.

- If you would like to join the Media Room at DCBOE headquarters on Election Night, reach out to Sarah Graham at sgraham@dcboe.org or by calling/texting, 202-235-4310.

Media access to Vote Centers during Early Voting or Election Day:

- Vote Center locations are available here: <https://www.dcboe.org/voters/find-out-where-to-vote/vote-center-locator-tool>
- DCBOE has posted media guidelines in each Vote Center. Vote Center Media guidelines are also available here: <https://dcboe.org/getmedia/bd3acf82-0e5c-4dbc-8136-42d31ea018d6/Guidelines-for-the-Media-2026-Primary-Election.pdf>.
- **Please bring official media credentials to present to the Site Coordinator upon arrival.**

Key things to remember when visiting Vote Centers:

- When you arrive at a Vote Center, check in with the Site Coordinator and show your media credentials as you enter. The Site Coordinator has supervisory authority and is required to keep a record of all visitors in the polling place.
- You may converse with voters inside the Vote Center, but you may not talk to any voter who is checking in or casting a ballot.
- Although you may take pictures in the Vote Center during voting hours, you may not compromise the privacy of voters' ballots. Photographs and camera footage should be taken with a wide-angle lens and should not capture the ballot or any of the voters' selections. Generally, the use of video and/or still cameras is permissible, provided it is not disruptive and does not interfere with voting.
- DCBOE asks that you ensure that the intended subject of any proposed photograph has agreed to have their picture taken.
- You are permitted inside the Vote Center for media coverage only. Please leave promptly once your work is complete.

Additional things media may NOT DO in the Vote Center include:

- Wear any campaign buttons, stickers, or insignia;
- Hand out any campaign literature;
- Support or discourage support of any candidate or measure on the ballot; or
- Impede the voting process or obstruct the Vote Center staff.

Guidelines of exit polling:

- Question only those individuals leaving the Vote Center.
- Inform voters that responding to questions is purely voluntary.
- Do not interfere, in any way, with access to the Vote Center.
- Do not position yourself within a 50-foot radius of the Vote Center entrance unless you have written permission from DCBOE to be closer.

FAQs:

What are the busiest Vote Centers for filming?

Early Voting:

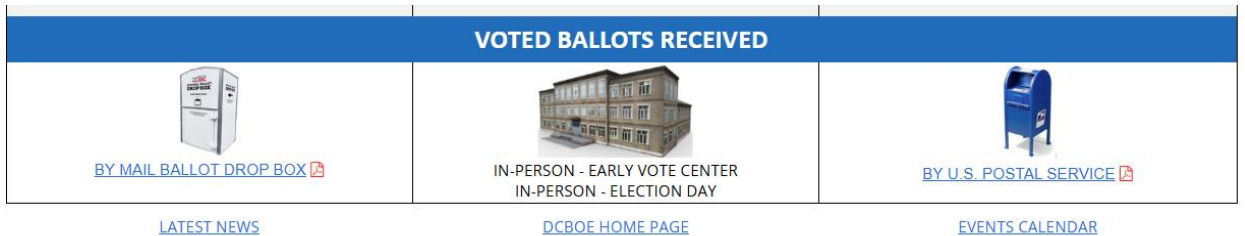
- Columbia Heights Community Center, 1480 Girard Street NW
- Turkey Thicket Recreation Center, 1100 Michigan Avenue NE
- Sherwood Recreation Center, 640 10th Street NE
- Cleveland Park Library, 3310 Connecticut Ave NW
- Chevy Chase Community Center, 5601 Connecticut Avenue NW

Election Day:

- Marie Reed Elementary School, 2201 18th Street NW
- Eastern Market, 225 7th Street SE
- Janney Elementary School, 4130 Albemarle Street NW
- Calvary Episcopal Church, 820 6th Street NE
- McKinley Technology High School, 151 T Street NE

Where do I find the number of voted ballots received or the number of votes cast at a particular Vote Center?

- Find the number of votes cast during Early Voting and the number of ballots collected from USPS and Mail Ballot Drop Boxes on the bottom of our homepage. See image:



- On Election Day, in-person voter totals (the number of voters at a particular Vote Center) may be requested at the Vote Centers. We do not provide in-person Election Day voter totals in a central location on Election Day. **These numbers will be available on our website AFTER Election Day.**

Ranked Choice Voting Overview

An RCV overview video is available at www.dcboe.org/rcv.

What is Ranked Choice Voting and why do we use it in DC?

Ranked choice voting (RCV) is a method in which voters rank candidates in order of preference. Beginning with the June 2026 Primary, RCV applies to eligible contests with three or more

candidates. Voters may rank up to five candidates, including write-in candidates. In 2024, DC voters approved a ballot initiative implementing RCV, and the DC Council funded it in the FY2026 budget.

Which Contests Use RCV?

In DC, RCV applies when three or more candidates appear on the ballot for the following offices:

- President and Vice President of the United States;
- Mayor;
- Attorney General; Chairman of the Council;
- Delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives;
- Members of the Council;
- Members of the State Board of Education;
- United States Senator;
- United States Representative; and
- Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner.

What are the Key Rules When Marking a Ballot?

- Voters are not required to rank more than one candidate. Ranking additional candidates does not harm their first choice.
- Do not give more than one candidate the same ranking. Rank only one candidate per column.
- Do not skip rankings (e.g., ranking first and third but not second). If you skip two or more rankings in a row, only the rankings before the skipped rankings will count.
- Do not give the same candidate more than one ranking.
- Only one vote counts per contest, even when you rank multiple candidates. Later choices are only counted if an earlier choice has been eliminated.
- Find sample valid and invalid voting scenarios at www.dcboe.org/RCV.

How are Votes Tabulated?

All first-choice votes are counted. If a candidate receives a majority (50% + 1), that candidate wins. If no candidate reaches a majority, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated, and those votes transfer to each voter's next-ranked active candidate. This process continues until a candidate reaches the majority threshold.

What Happens If There is a Tie?

Ties are extremely unlikely. If one occurs at any step, it is resolved by lot—the Board Chairperson or designee flips a coin.

Additional Talking Points to Share with Voters:

- Voting will take longer with RCV. Voters are encouraged to use Early Voting or return their mail-in ballot. Vote Centers will have educational materials and specially trained staff available to assist.
 - Voters may take their mail-in ballot to the Vote Center and use it as a guide when voting.
 - Sample ballots, educational videos, and a tool to learn how RCV tabulation works are available at www.dcboe.org/RCV.
 - DCBOE is here to help. If voters have questions, they can visit our website, www.dcboe.org or call (202) 727-2525.
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Election Night Results: What Can the Media Expect

Overview:

- Election results will look different from previous elections.
 - Election results will be available at <https://electionresults.dcboe.org/>.
 - The 2026 election results webpage will NOT be available until after all polls close. A direct link will be provided on www.dcboe.org.
 - Interim election results will be released after the polls close and in-person voting concludes at all Vote Centers.
 - Notices of election results updates will also be posted on social media (@vote4dc) and sent via email. To be added to the election results email update list, email Sarah Graham at sgraham@dcboe.org.
 - Election results are reported through Precinct, Ward, and District-wide vote totals.
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Election Results Reporting: Cadence of Results and Tabulation Reports

Election Night:

- On Election Night, DCBOE will release interim election results. The results will include votes from in-person voting during Early Voting and on Election Day AND from mail-in ballots tabulated and processed before Election Day.
- The results released on Election Night DO NOT include ballots received on Election Day from Mail Ballot Drop Boxes and USPS, or any outstanding mail-in ballots that were postmarked by Election Day.
- If a contest is an RCV contest, only first-choice results are reported on Election Night.

Timing for Election Night results releases:

- **First Election Night release:** The first release will occur after the polls close and the last voters in line at 8:00 pm have cast their ballots.
- **Additional Election Night updates:** DCBOE will release additional first-choice results as we process ballots. We anticipate several updates.

When reporting election results on Election Night, please indicate:

- **Election night results are interim, not final results.** Make it clear that interim results are incomplete and not official.
- Reminder: Election results are not final until all ballots are received, counted, and the election is certified. **Certification is tentatively scheduled for Friday, July 17, 2026.**

After Election Night:

- For contests subject to RCV, if no candidate receives a majority of the votes (50% + 1) after first-choice votes are counted, DCBOE will conduct round-by-round tabulation until a candidate receives a majority of the votes.
- Once DCBOE has received and processed the majority of ballots, we will begin RCV tabulation rounds.
- DCBOE will release interim round-by-round tabulation results as we process ballots.

Timing for tabulation round results releases:

- **Interim RCV round-by-round tabulation results** are estimated to be released on:
 - Sunday, June 21, 2026
 - Wednesday, June 24, 2026
- The **final round-by-round tabulation results** will be released on or after June 26, 2026.

FAQS:

Why are only first choice results reported on Election Night in RCV contests?

- DCBOE typically receives a significant portion of ballots via Mail Ballot Drop Boxes on Election Day, and must process those ballots before they can be counted.
- DCBOE has structured the RCV results reporting schedule to ensure that the first release of interim round-by-round results includes a substantial proportion of ballots.

How can the media obtain RCV round-by-round results?

Round-by-round results visualizations will be available on <https://electionresults.dcboe.org/>. The media can download a CSV of Detailed RCV Reports after the results have been certified.

Will you notify the media of election results updates?

Yes. DCBOE will notify the public of election results as they are uploaded. Update notifications will be shared on social media (@vote4dc), the website at <https://electionresults.dcboe.org/>, and by email. To be included on the election results email list, contact Sarah Graham at sgraham@dcboe.org or fill out this form: <https://forms.gle/Mca7dtLednkGwCk17>

When will we know the final Election results?

Final election results will not be released until after mail and valid special ballots have been processed and tabulated, a post-election audit for the Special Election has been conducted, and

DCBOE has certified the election results. **The certification of election results is tentatively scheduled for Friday, July 17, 2026.**

Helpful Webpages:

Election Day Media Guidelines:

<https://dcboe.org/community-outreach/media> or <https://dcboe.org/getmedia/bd3acf82-0e5c-4dbc-8136-42d31ea018d6/Guidelines-for-the-Media-2026-Primary-Election.pdf>

2026 Elections (includes sample ballots, candidate lists, and election calendars with important dates):

<https://www.dcboe.org/elections/2026-elections>

Election Results:

<https://electionresults.dcboe.org/>

Voter Registration Statistics:

<https://dcboe.org/data,-maps,-forms/voter-registration-statistics>

Early Voting Vote Centers locations: (includes wait times)

<https://earlyvoting.dcboe.org/>

Election Day Vote Center Locations:

<https://www.dcboe.org/voters/find-out-where-to-vote/election-day-vote-centers>

Mail Ballot Drop Box Locations:

<https://www.dcboe.org/voters/find-out-where-to-vote/mail-ballot-drop-box-locations>

Mail Ballot instructions:

<https://dcboe.org/voters/casting-your-vote/mail-ballot-instructions>

Ranked Choice Voting information: (includes FAQs, educational videos, tabulation app, flyers, and other resources)

<https://dcboe.org/rcv>



District of Columbia Board of Elections

GUIDELINES FOR THE MEDIA

The DC Board of Elections (DCBOE) provides the following guidelines for orderly conduct during the June 16, 2026, Primary Election to protect the rights of all participants in the voting process.

GUIDELINES FOR COVERING ACTIVITY AT THE VOTE CENTER

- When you arrive at a Vote Center, contact the Site Coordinator - they are in charge of the Vote Center, and must keep a record of all visitors. Please show your media credentials to the Site Coordinator as you enter the Vote Center.
- Although you may take pictures in the Vote Center during voting hours, you may not compromise the privacy of voters' ballots. Photographs and camera footage should be taken with a wide-angle lens and should not capture the ballot or any of the voters' selections. Generally, the use of video and/or still cameras is permissible as long as such use is not disruptive and does not interfere with voting.
- DCBOE asks that you ensure that the intended subject of any proposed photograph has agreed to have their picture taken.
- Do not talk to any voter who is in the process of checking in or casting a ballot. During other times, you may converse with voters inside the Vote Center, but you may NOT:
 - Wear any campaign buttons, stickers, or insignia;
 - Hand out any campaign literature;
 - Support or discourage support of any candidate or measure on the ballot; or
 - Impede the voting process or obstruct the Vote Center staff.
- You are permitted inside the Vote Center for media coverage only. Please leave promptly once your work is complete.

GUIDELINES FOR EXIT POLLING

- Question only those individuals leaving the Vote Center.
- Be sure to tell people that responding to questions is purely voluntary.
- Do not interfere in any way with access to the Vote Center.
- Do not position yourself within a 50-foot radius of the Vote Center entrance unless you have written permission from DCBOE to be closer.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Sarah Graham, Director of Communications, at:

- Direct: (202) 221-8572
- Cell: (202) 235-4310
- Email: sgraham@dcboe.org