



CHAPTER 163
ARTICLE 10 - PRIMARY ELECTIONS

N.C.G.S. § 163-111.

Determination of primary results; second primaries.

SOURCE	LAST AMENDMENT IN THIS TEXT	RETRIEVED	SOURCE FINGERPRINT
General Statutes of North Carolina, as published by the General Assembly	S.L. 2023-140, s. 16.5 — thirty-fourth act in the lineage	21 September 2026, 02:13 UTC	3879e3e685dae01dbef3e347 - a6c2b629de5d8d83fff19820 - 89cba43648cdaca4

- § 163-111(a)** Nomination Determined by Substantial Plurality; Definition of Substantial Plurality.
- Except as otherwise provided in this section, nominations in primary elections shall be determined by a substantial plurality of the votes cast. A substantial plurality within the meaning of this section shall be determined as follows:
- (1) If a nominee for a single office is to be selected, and there is more than one person seeking nomination, the substantial plurality shall be ascertained by multiplying the total vote cast for all aspirants by thirty percent (30%). Any excess of the sum so ascertained shall be a substantial plurality, and the aspirant who obtains a substantial plurality shall be declared the nominee. If two candidates receive a substantial plurality, the candidate receiving the highest vote shall be declared the nominee.
 - (2) If nominees for two or more offices (constituting a group) are to be selected, and there are more persons seeking nomination than there are offices, the substantial plurality shall be ascertained by dividing the total vote cast for all aspirants by the number of positions to be filled, and by multiplying the result by thirty percent (30%). Any excess of the sum so ascertained shall be a substantial plurality, and the aspirants who obtain a substantial plurality shall be declared the nominees. If more candidates obtain a substantial plurality than there are positions to be filled, those having the highest vote (equal to the number of positions to be filled) shall be declared the nominees.

§ 163-111(b)

Right to Demand Second Primary. - If an insufficient number of aspirants receive a substantial plurality of the votes cast for a given office or group of offices in a primary, a second primary, subject to the conditions specified in this section, shall be held:

- (1) If a nominee for a single office is to be selected and no aspirant receives a substantial plurality of the votes cast, the aspirant receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared nominated by the appropriate board of elections unless the aspirant receiving the second highest number of votes shall request a second primary in accordance with the provisions of subsection (c) of this section. In the second primary only the two aspirants who received the highest and next highest number of votes shall be voted for.
- (2) If nominees for two or more offices (constituting a group) are to be selected and aspirants for some or all of the positions within the group do not receive a substantial plurality of the votes, those candidates equal in number to the positions remaining to be filled and having the highest number of votes shall be declared the nominees unless some one or all of the aspirants equal in number to the positions remaining to be filled and having the second highest number of votes shall request a second primary in accordance with the provisions of subsection (c) of this section. In the second primary to select nominees for the positions in the group remaining to be filled, the names of all those candidates receiving the highest number of votes and all those receiving the second highest number of votes and demanding a second primary shall be printed on the ballot.

§ 163-111(c)

Procedure for Requesting Second Primary. -

- (1) A candidate who is apparently entitled to demand a second primary, according to the unofficial results, for one of the offices listed below, and desiring to do so, shall file a request for a second primary in writing with the Executive Director of the State Board of Elections no later than 12:00 noon on the ninth day (including Saturdays and Sundays) following the date on which the primary was conducted, and such request shall be subject to the certification of the official results by the State Board of Elections. If the vote certification by the State Board of Elections determines that a candidate who was not originally thought to be eligible to call for a second primary is in fact eligible to call for a second primary, the Executive Director of the State Board of Elections shall immediately notify such candidate and permit the candidate to exercise any options available to the candidate within a 48-hour period following the notification:

Governor,

Lieutenant Governor,

All State executive officers,

Justices, Judges, or District Attorneys of the General Court of Justice,

United States Senators,

Members of the United States House of Representatives,

State Senators in multi-county senatorial districts, and

Members of the State House of Representatives in multi-county representative districts.

- (2) A candidate who is apparently entitled to demand a second primary, according to the unofficial results, for one of the offices listed below and desiring to do so, shall file a request for a second primary in writing with the chairman or director of the county board of elections no later than 12:00 noon on the ninth day (including Saturdays and Sundays) following the date on which the primary was conducted, and such request shall be subject to the certification of the official results by the county board of elections:

State Senators in single-county senatorial districts,

Members of the State House of Representatives in single-county representative districts, and

All county officers.

- (3) Immediately upon receipt of a request for a second primary the appropriate board of elections, State or county, shall notify all candidates entitled to participate in the second primary, by telephone followed by written notice, that a second primary has been requested and of the date of the second primary.

§ 163-111(d)

Tie Votes; How Determined. -

- (1) In the event of a tie for the highest number of votes in a first primary between two candidates for party nomination for a single county, or single-county legislative district office, the board of elections of the county in which the two candidates were voted for shall conduct a recount and declare the results. If the recount shows a tie vote, a second primary shall be held on the date prescribed in subsection (e) of this section between the two candidates having an equal vote, unless one of the aspirants, within three days after the result of the recount has been officially declared, files a written notice of withdrawal with the board of elections with which he filed notice of candidacy. Should that be done, the remaining aspirant shall be declared the nominee. In the event of a tie for the highest number of votes in a first primary among more than two candidates for party nomination for one of the offices mentioned in this subdivision, no recount shall be held, but all of the tied candidates shall be entered in a second primary.
- (2) In the event of a tie for the highest number of votes in a first primary between two candidates for a State office, for United States Senator, or for any district office (including State Senator in a multi-county senatorial district and member of the State House of Representatives in a multi-county representative district), no recount shall be held solely by reason of the tie, but the two candidates having an equal vote shall be entered in a second primary to be held on the date prescribed in subsection (e) of this section, unless one of the two candidates files a written notice of withdrawal with the State Board of Elections within three days after the result of the first primary has been officially declared and published. Should that be done, the remaining aspirant shall be declared the nominee. In the event of a tie for the highest number of votes in a first primary among more than two candidates for party nomination for one of the offices mentioned in this subdivision, no recount shall be held, but all of the tied candidates shall be entered in a second primary.

- (3) In the event one candidate receives the highest number of votes cast in a first primary, but short of a substantial plurality, and two or more of the other candidates receive the second highest number of votes cast in an equal number, the proper board of elections shall declare the candidate having the highest vote to be the party nominee, unless all but one of the tied candidates give written notice of withdrawal to the proper board of elections within three days after the result of the first primary has been officially declared. If all but one of the tied candidates withdraw within the prescribed three-day period, and the remaining candidate demands a second primary in accordance with the provisions of subsection (c) of this section, a second primary shall be held between the candidate who received the highest vote and the remaining candidate who received the second highest vote.

§ 163-111(e)

Date of Second Primary; Procedures. - If a second primary is required under the provisions of this section, the appropriate board of elections, State or county, shall order that it be held 10 weeks after the first primary.

There shall be no registration of voters between the dates of the first and second primaries. Persons whose qualifications to register and vote mature after the day of the first primary and before the day of the second primary may register on the day of the second primary and, when thus registered, shall be entitled to vote in the second primary. The second primary is a continuation of the first primary and any voter who files a proper and timely written affirmation of change of address within the county under the provisions of G.S. 163-82.15, in the first primary may vote in the second primary without having to refile that written affirmation if the voter is otherwise qualified to vote in the second primary. Subject to this provision for registration, the second primary shall be held under the laws, rules, and regulations provided for the first primary.

§ 163-111(f)

No Third Primary Permitted. - In no case shall there be a third primary. The candidates receiving the highest number of votes in the second primary shall be nominated. If in a second primary there is a tie for the highest number of votes between two candidates, the proper party executive committee shall select the party nominee for the office in accordance with the provisions of G.S. 163-114.

END OF SECTION TEXT

APPARATUS FOLLOWS — DERIVED, NOT ENACTED

APPARATUS I

34 ACTS

Amendment lineage

The State prints this history as a single parenthetical at the foot of the section. It is reproduced verbatim in the colophon and unpacked below in order of enactment.



Nº	YEAR	ACT	CHARACTER
01	1915	c. 101, s. 24	ENACTED
02	1917	c. 179, s. 2	AMENDED
03	1917	c. 218	AMENDED
04	C.S.	s. 6045	RECODIFIED
05	1927	c. 260, s. 23	AMENDED
06	1931	c. 254, s. 17	AMENDED
07	1959	c. 1055	AMENDED
08	1961	c. 383	AMENDED
09	1966	Ex. Sess., c. 5, s. 13	AMENDED
10	1967	c. 775, s. 1	AMENDED
11	1969	c. 44, s. 85	AMENDED
12	1973	c. 47, s. 2	AMENDED
13	1973	c. 793, ss. 43, 44	AMENDED
14	1975	c. 844, s. 3	AMENDED
15	1977	c. 265, s. 9	AMENDED
16	1981	c. 645, ss. 1, 2	AMENDED
17	1989	c. 549	AMENDED
18	1995	c. 243, s. 1	AMENDED
19	1996	2nd Ex. Sess., c. 9, s. 10	AMENDED
20	1999	S.L. 1999-424, s. 7(e)	AMENDED
21	2001	S.L. 2001-319, s. 11	AMENDED
22	2001	S.L. 2001-403, s. 5	AMENDED
23	2002	S.L. 2002-158, s. 12	AMENDED
24	2003	S.L. 2003-278, s. 10(d)	AMENDED

25	2006	S.L. 2006-192, s. 2	AMENDED
26	2011	S.L. 2011-182, s. 4	AMENDED
27	2016	S.L. 2016-125, 4th Ex. Sess., s. 21(d)	AMENDED
28	2017	S.L. 2017-3, s. 8	AMENDED
29	2017	S.L. 2017-6, s. 3	AMENDED
30	2017	S.L. 2017-214, s. 3	AMENDED
31	2018	S.L. 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b)	AMENDED
32	2021	S.L. 2021-56, s. 1.5(a)	AMENDED
33	2022	S.L. 2022-6, s. 20.6A(b), (c)	AMENDED
34	2023	S.L. 2023-140, s. 16.5	AMENDED

APPARATUS II
2 AUTHORITIES

Authorities referenced

Every G.S. cross-reference appearing in the text of this section, in order of first appearance. Nothing is characterized; the operative language is quoted from the section itself.

REFERENCE	APPEARS IN	OPERATIVE LANGUAGE IN THIS SECTION
G.S. 163-82.15	(e)	<i>"the county under the provisions of"</i>
G.S. 163-114	(f)	<i>"in accordance with the provisions of"</i>

APPARATUS III

Citation

FULL SECTION

N.C. Gen. Stat. § 163-111 (2023).

PINPOINT

N.C. Gen. Stat. § 163-111(a) (2023).

Pinpoint keys are set in the left margin of the text rather than line numbers: subsection designators are stable across editions and paper sizes, line numbers are not.

COLOPHON

Provenance

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HISTORY PARENTHETICAL, AS PRINTED BY THE STATE

(1915, c. 101, s. 24; 1917, c. 179, s. 2; c. 218; C.S., s. 6045; 1927, c. 260, s. 23; 1931, c. 254, s. 17; 1959, c. 1055; 1961, c. 383; 1966, Ex. Sess., c. 5, s. 13; 1967, c. 775, s. 1; 1969, c. 44, s. 85; 1973, c. 47, s. 2; c. 793, ss. 43, 44; 1975, c. 844, s. 3; 1977, c. 265, s. 9; 1981, c. 645, ss. 1, 2; 1989, c. 549; 1995, c. 243, s. 1; 1996, 2nd Ex. Sess., c. 9, s. 10; 1999-424, s. 7(e); 2001-319, s. 11; 2001-403, s. 5; 2002-158, s. 12; 2003-278, s. 10(d); 2006-192, s. 2; 2011-182, s. 4; 2016-125, 4th Ex. Sess., s. 21(d); 2017-3, s. 8; 2017-6, s. 3; 2017-214, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b); 2021-56, s. 1.5(a); 2022-6, s. 20.6A(b), (c); 2023-140, s. 16.5.)

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