



## Highlights of Michigan Election Law – 2025

**1954:** The Michigan Election Law, Public Act 116 of 1954 became law. [MCL - Act 116 of 1954 - Michigan Legislature](#)

**1963:** Michigan Constitution adopted with provisions relating to elections and electors. Article II addresses elections and stated that every citizen of the United States who has attained the age of 21 years, who has resided in this state six months, and who meets the requirements of local residence provided by law, shall be an elector and qualified to vote in any election except as otherwise provided in this constitution. [michiganconstitution1963asratified.pdf](#)

**2018:** On January 22, 2018, the Promote the Vote campaign was kicked off, led by NAACP, LWVMI, ACLU of Michigan and MI League of Public Policy.

September 7, 2018, the State Board of Canvassers approved the language for the ballot to amend the Michigan Constitution.

### *Proposal 18-3*

*A proposal to authorize automatic and Election Day voter registration, no-reason absentee voting, and straight ticket voting; and add current legal requirements for military and overseas voting and post-election audits to the Michigan Constitution*

*This proposed constitutional amendment would allow a United States citizen who is qualified to vote in Michigan to:*

- Become automatically registered to vote when applying for, updating or renewing a driver's license or state-issued personal identification card, unless the person declines.*
- Simultaneously register to vote with proof of residency and obtain a ballot during the 2-week period prior to an election, up to and including Election Day.*
- Obtain an absent voter ballot without providing a reason.*
- Cast a straight-ticket vote for all candidates of a particular political party when voting in a partisan general election.*

*Should this proposal be adopted?*

YES

NO

November 6, 2018, Election Day, PTV ballot proposal, 2018-3, passed. The proposal passed by 67% of people in 80 out of 83 counties. 2,775,387 (67%) voted yes and 1,373,151 (33%) voted no. The complete wording is available at [Petition Promote the Vote.pdf](#)

**2021:** March, the Michigan Senate Republicans introduced a 39-bill package to change election law. According to the Detroit Free Press, [Michigan GOP senators file 39 election reform bills: What's in them](#), the proposed changes contained in the 39 bills are:

- *Require drop boxes for absentee ballots to be approved by the secretary of state and the county board of canvassers. Require the removal of absentee ballot drop boxes used in the November general election that aren't approved. Implement new requirements for monitoring such boxes. (SB 273)*
- *Allow those between the ages of 16 and 17½ to pre-register to vote if they meet certain conditions. (SB 274)*
- *Allow individuals from each political party to observe and record election audits carried out at precincts and allow clerks to provide live video coverage of counting boards tasked with processing and counting absentee ballots. (SB 275)*
- *Authorize election inspectors, challengers and poll watchers to photograph and film the tabulation of votes. (SB 276)*
- *Allow county clerks to flag deceased voters in the qualified voter file — which houses each voter's information and is widely used for many election needs — and require them to notify local clerks of any people who have died in the county every two weeks and then every week the 45 days before an election. (SB 277)*
- *Require those collecting absentee ballots from drop boxes to carry ballots in approved containers and require clerks to document each time ballots are collected. (SB 278)*
- *Modify the number of election challengers allowed to observe absent voter counting boards based on the number of absentee ballots assigned to the board. (SB 279)*
- *Require the board of state canvassers to complete the canvass of an initiative petition within 100 days after the petition is filed. (SB 280)*
- *Require the secretary of state to collect information from multistate programs and partnerships the secretary of state is participating in to verify voters' addresses and registration status. Require the secretary of state to post on the department of state's website the number of voters who moved out of state, the number of voters who changed addresses, duplicate voter registration records, voters who died and the results of investigations concerning improper votes among other information. (SB 281)*
- *Limit who can access the qualified voter file. (SB 282)*
- *Change the deadline for county board of canvassers to examine ballot containers. Allow clerks in large jurisdictions to begin processing but not counting absentee ballots the day before the election. (SB 283)*
- *Require the secretary of state to provide a report to the Legislature detailing any contracts entered into for an election-related activity or service. Prohibit the state, counties, cities and townships from accepting contributions from individuals and entities to be used for election-related activities or election equipment. (SB 284)*
- *Require those requesting an absentee ballot to present identification to their local clerk or attach a copy of their ID to their application. Require clerks to issue a provisional absentee ballot to those who fail to show ID. (SB 285)*
- *Prohibit voters from using a drop box after 5 p.m. the day before Election Day. (SB 286)*

- *Prohibit clerks from providing prepaid postage for absentee ballot return envelopes and prohibit the secretary of state from providing funding for prepaid postage. (SB 287)*
- *Require statewide election audits conducted in a precinct to be carried out by members of the two major political parties and allow political parties to designate observers to monitor the audit and require the secretary of state to provide live video streaming of an audit. (SB 288)*
- *Require federal funds for election-related purposes to only be spent upon appropriation in a budget act and require any funds that aren't appropriated within a budget act within 90 days to be returned to the federal government. (SB 289)*
- *Require election challengers to wear an identification badge. (SB 290)*
- *Amend the criminal code to expand election-related felonies. (SB 291)*
- *Require the secretary of state to establish training for election challengers. Require challengers to be associated with a political party, as opposed to groups advocating for a ballot proposition, and mandate they take training at least once every three years. Parties would need to offer this training at least three days before an election. (SB 292)*
- *Repeal a portion of criminal law related to election challengers appointed by entities that are not political parties. SB 292 bill would only allow political parties to provide challengers. (SB 293)*
- *Require the local board of election commissioners to strive to appoint the same number of Democratic and Republican election inspectors for every election precinct. This can be a challenge in areas that have substantially more Republican or Democratic voters — chiefly Detroit. If the board cannot appoint an essentially equal number of inspectors based on the party, the local clerk would need to send a report to the state within 10 days of the election explaining what was done to search for inspectors. (SB 294)*
- *Require hourly checks by precinct officials to ensure that during the ballot counting process, the number of ballots issued at a precinct matches the number of ballots tabulated at a precinct. While this law is intended to prevent out-of-balance precincts, it seemingly doesn't account for someone receiving an absentee ballot but not ultimately casting it. (SB 295)*
- *Abolish every existing board of canvassers in a county with at least 200,000 starting in 2022. In a county with 200,000 to 750,000 people, it would require six-member boards. In larger counties, it would require eight-member boards. While boards now generally consist of four people, keeping boards at an even number would still allow for the chance that certification votes end in a tie. (SB 296)*
- *Require at least one Republican and Democrat be present at all times during an election canvass. Require board approval for the clerk to hire any associate who would help with the canvass. (SB 297)*
- *Extend the amount of time for an election canvass to be certified from 14 days after an election to 21 days. (SB 298)*
- *Require election inspectors to deliver the statement of election returns and a vote tally sheet in a sealed envelope to the local clerk by noon the day after the election. (SB 299)*
- *Require holding on-site early voting from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the second Saturday before any election. Clerks would need to post where and when early voting sites would be open. It would be a felony to reveal results from an early voting period until after polls closed on Election Day. (SB 300)*
- *Create criminal violations for tampering with ballots cast early or with revealing the results from early voting. (SB 301)*
- *Require voter registration applications include a provision where applicants attest that they do not claim voting residence or have the right to vote in another state. It's unclear whether this would entail whether a person is registered to vote in another state, even if that person moved away from that state to Michigan. (SB 302)*

- *Ramp up the state's voter identification requirements. Right now, voters who do not have photo identification can sign an affidavit attesting to their identity. This bill would instead mandate that they be issued provisional ballots, subject to a separate process of counting and verification. (SB 303)*
- *Outline how voters who want their provisional ballots to count would verify their identity. The bill would require these voters to prove their identity within six days of the election — if they present a government-issued ID that does not include an address, voters would also need to present a document such as a utility bill or bank statement verifying their address. (SB 304)*
- *Ban elected officials from including their names on publicly funded materials that have anything to do with elections. Officials could post the names of offices and contact information, but not the name of the election official. In theory, this would prohibit the secretary of state or county clerks from using taxpayer dollars to campaign while spreading election information. In practice, the measure would likely make it a misdemeanor for an elected official to post a news release with a quote on social media. (SB 305)*
- *Require the secretary of state to submit a report to the Legislature and publicly post within 45 days of an election the names of all local clerks who have not conducted required training. (SB 306)*
- *Require the full text of a ballot proposal be included on absentee ballots and ballots cast in person. (SB 307)*
- *Mandate the secretary of state create a signature verification process and that local clerks be trained on that process. This comes in response to misinformation about signatures on absentee ballot applications and absentee ballots. (SB 308)*
- *Outline rules and regulations for poll watchers and poll challengers. It explains the duties of both positions, where they are allowed to stand on Election Day, what they are allowed to challenge and how to resolve disputes. Republicans argued challengers and watchers at TCF Center in Detroit were prevented from monitoring election workers last fall, but the city and Democrats argued these challengers did not understand their roles and ignored COVID-19 social distancing guidelines. (SB 309)*
- *Prohibit the secretary of state from either mailing absentee ballot applications or posting these applications on a website. The secretary could only mail an application to someone who requested that application. It was not immediately clear whether any other entity — such as local clerks or political parties — would be banned from mailing out unsolicited applications. Republicans routinely argue mailing out applications to voters who did not request them may increase the chances of voter fraud. Voter fraud is exceptionally rare, and there is no evidence that mass mailings of applications drastically increases fraud. (SB 310)*
- *Allow active duty service members who are deployed at the time of an election to cast a ballot electronically, as long as signature verification measures are created and used. (SB 311)*

June 23, 2021, the Michigan Senate Oversight Committee released its report on the November 2020 election. The committee was chaired by Senator Ed McBroom. The committee found no fraud. [Michigan Senate finds no voter fraud. But here's what it did find](#)

September, the MI Board of State Canvassers approved the petitions for Secure MI Vote to gather signatures to tighten Michigan's voting and election laws. The group failed to gather enough signatures for the ballot.

October 11, 2021, MI Governor Whitmer signs a SB 311, a bill to allow military to return their ballot electronically, PA 197 of 2022.

October 19, 2021, MI Governor Whitmer vetoes two bills in the 39-bill election package, SB 277 and SB 278. The bills allow county clerks to flag deceased voters in the qualified voter file and require conditions for collecting ballots from drop boxes.

November 2, 2021, MI Governor Whitmer vetoes two more bills in the Senate Republican election package, SB 303 and SB 304. The bills make stricter requirements for using a provisional ballot.

**2022:** March, MI Governor Whitmer vetoes another bill in the 39-bill election package, SB 302. The bill increases penalties for voting more than once. Of the 39 bills, 6 bills were sent to the Governor and one was signed and 5 were vetoed.

July 11, 2022, Promote the Vote, of which LWVMI is a member, held a press conference to turn in signatures, 727,316 gross signatures.

August 19, 2022, the State Board of Canvassers agreed to the wording for Proposition 22-2 to amend the Michigan Constitution.

*Proposal 22-2*

*A proposal to amend the state constitution to require annual public financial disclosure reports by legislators and other state officers and change state legislator term limit to 12 total years in legislature*

*This proposed constitutional amendment would:*

- *Require members of legislature, governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, and attorney general file annual public financial disclosure reports after 2023, including assets, liabilities, income sources, future employment agreements, gifts, travel reimbursements, and positions held in organizations except religious, social, and political organizations.*
- *Require legislature implement but not limit or restrict reporting requirements.*
- *Replace current term limits for state representatives and state senators with a 12-year total limit in any combination between house and senate, except a person elected to senate in 2022 may be elected the number of times allowed when that person became a candidate.*

*Should this proposal be adopted?*

YES

NO

November 8, the results for Proposal 22-2 were 2,586,255 (59,99%) voted yes and 1,725,119 (40.01%) voted no. The full text is available at [https://michigantownships.org/wp-content/uploads/Proposal-22\\_2-Promote-the-Vote-FULL-Text.pdf](https://michigantownships.org/wp-content/uploads/Proposal-22_2-Promote-the-Vote-FULL-Text.pdf)

**2023:** May, PA 25 of 2023 (SB 259) signed into law allowing tabulating of absentee ballots 6 days after election.

July 2023, PA 81 of 2023 (SB 367), PA 82 of 2023 (SB 370), PA 83 of 2023 (HB 4696), PA 85 (HB 4697) and PA 87 of 2023 (SB 373) signed into law modifying early and absentee ballot voting processes.

PA 84 of 2023 (SB 339) signed into law provides on-line tracking for absentee ballots.

PA 86 of 2023 (HB 4699) signed into law establishes permanent absentee voter list.

PA 88 of 2023 (HB 4702) signed into law increases precinct size from 2,999 to 5,000.

November 2023, PA 184 (HB 4567) signed into law to amend ballot challenge requirements.

PA 185 of 2023 (HB 4568) signed into law to allow hired transportation to the polls.

PA 193 of 2023 (SB 470) signed into law to establish electronic voting for military members in 2025.

PA 226 and PA 227 of 2023 (SB 572 and SB 573) signed into law to amend precinct size from 5,000 to 4,999.

PA 251 of 2023 (SB 385) signed into law to allow online election inspector applications.

PA 252 of 2023 (SB 505) and PA 253 of 2023 (HB 4129) signed into law to prohibit intimidation or harassment of election workers.

PA 254 of 2023 (SB 570) signed into law to prohibit party officials from participating in election audits.

PA 255 of 2023 (SB 590) and PA 256 of 2023 (SB 591) signed into law to codify procedures and grounds for contesting elections.

PA 257 (SB 594) signed into law and modify online voter registration.

PA 258 of 2023 (HB 4569) signed into law to allow preregistration at age 16.

PA 259 of 2023 (HB 4695) signed into law to modify early voting procedures.

PA 260 of 2023 (HB 4984), PA 261 of 2023 (HB 4985), PA 262 of 2023 (HB 4986) and PA 268 of 2023 (HB 4983) signed into law to codify automatic voter registration procedures.

PA 263 of 2023 (HB 5141), PA 264 of 2023 (HB 5143) and PA 265 of 2023 (HB 5144) and PA 266 (HB 5145) signed into law to regulate artificial intelligence for political campaigns and provide criminal penalties.

PA 267 of 2023 (SB 374) signed into law to require candidates to file campaign finance reports before taking office.

PA 269 of 2023 (SB 529) signed into law to amend the election canvas process.

PA 270 of 2023 (HB 4570) signed into law to provide online voter registration.

**2024:** June, PA 74 of 2024 (SB 603) and PA 75 of 2024 (SB 604) signed into law to regulate election recounts.

December 2024, PA 157 of 2024 (HB 4127) and PA 158 of 2024 (HB 4128) signed into law to prohibit firearms at drop boxes and polling places.

Many bills LWVMI supported died at the end of session including National Popular Vote (HB 4129 and HB 4440) and the MI Voting Rights Act (SBs 401-404).

**2025:** January, PA 221 of 2024 (HB 6052) signed into law to allow use of on demand ballots. PA 222 of 2024 (HB 6053) signed into law to define timeframe for election-related lawsuits.

Governor Whitmer vetoed bills to amend the petition process, House Bills 5571, 5572, 5573, HB 5575, and HB 5576.

PA 234 of 2024 (HB 5574) signed into law to require Secretary of State to post certain information regarding petitions.

\*Bills are available at [www.legislature.mi.gov](http://www.legislature.mi.gov).

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