Voter Registration Reopens; County Clerks Seek to Modernize Registration Deadlines

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SANTA FE, N.M. – Voter registration is open again in New Mexico following the 2026 General Election, and county clerks are processing thousands of registration applications and updates that accumulated during the nearly month-long voter registration processing blackout.

The New Mexico County Clerks Affiliate has made shortening that blackout to immediately before Election Day a legislative priority. Santa Fe County Clerk Katharine E. Clark, the Affiliate's Legislative Chair, is working with fellow clerks to advance legislation moving the processing cutoff to immediately before Election Day. The change would allow clerks to process applications and updates throughout most of early voting.

The restriction dates to an era when election officials closed physical registration books to finalize voter lists. New Mexico now maintains registration records digitally, but state law still requires regular processing to stop during approximately a month of in-person voting before Election Day.

"Closing the books made sense when we were working with physical registration books," said Clark. "Today, we're working with a digital database. There is no reason we should have to stop processing registrations for an entire month while applications pile up. We should be using that time to get voters' records updated and ready before Election Day."

During the 2026 General Election, more than one-third of Santa Fe County voters who used Same-Day Registration had recently submitted a registration or update online or through the Motor Vehicle Division's Automatic Voter Registration process.

When previously submitted registrations and updates have not yet been processed, voters may need to use Same-Day Registration at the polls even though they have already taken steps to register. This creates additional work for both voters and election officials.

Same-Day Registration is an important option that allows eligible voters to register or update their information when they vote. However, it requires additional time and assistance from election workers, and the technology continues to experience slowdowns and technical issues, particularly during peak voting hours.

"Voters shouldn't have to understand the technical details of election administration to have a smooth voting experience," said Clark. "The registration cutoff leaves applications waiting to be processed, leaving voters to face Same-Day Registration lines, sometimes after polls close. Moving the processing deadline closer to Election Day would help voters and election workers alike."

Processing previously submitted applications during early voting would help keep voter records current, reduce unnecessary demand for Same-Day Registration, and limit post-election backlogs. Election workers could focus more attention on voters who need to register or update their information at the polls.

Check Your Voter Registration

New Mexico voters can now check their registration status and submit updates ahead of future elections. Visit NMVote.gov, the New Mexico Secretary of State's official voter information portal, to verify your registration, update your address, or make other necessary changes.

For more information about voting in Santa Fe County, visit SantaFe.Vote.