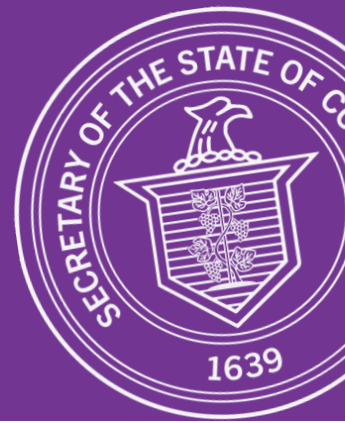


Every week from October 8-29, the **Office of the Secretary of the State** will distribute a Connecticut 2026 General Election Fact Sheet to the media.



Connecticut 2026 General Election Media Fact Sheet

Thursday, October 15, 2026

FOCUS ON

Early Voting

Early Voting gives Connecticut voters a convenient and secure way to **cast their ballots in person** before Election Day. New laws passed earlier this year bring important changes to how Early Voting works.



New in 2026: Early Voting Will Look More Like Election Day Voting

STORY IDEA 1

Voters Asked. Connecticut Responded. Early Voting Gets an Upgrade.

When Connecticut introduced Early in-person Voting, voters placed their completed ballots in sealed envelopes to be counted on Election Day. This year, they'll insert their ballots directly into tabulators, just as



Continued on page 2

In-Person Early Voting Dates and Times

- 10 AM - 6 PM October 19
- 10 AM - 6 PM October 20
- 10 AM - 6 PM October 21
- 10 AM - 6 PM October 22
- 10 AM - 6 PM October 23
- 10 AM - 6 PM October 24
- 10 AM - 6 PM October 25
- 10 AM - 6 PM October 26
- 8 AM - 8 PM October 27
- 10 AM - 6 PM October 28
- 8 AM - 8 PM October 29
- 10 AM - 6 PM October 30
- 10 AM - 6 PM October 31
- 10 AM - 6 PM November 1

Voters Asked. Connecticut Responded.

Continued from page 1

they do on Election Day. The change, enacted through **P.A. 26-1**, was made possible by our Office's efforts to secure more than \$20 million for over 2,700 new tabulators. Rolled out statewide in 2025, the equipment represented Connecticut's first major voting technology upgrade in nearly 20 years and paved the way for the Legislature to modernize the Early Voting process in 2026.

Why it matters: The new voting equipment gave the Legislature and our Office an opportunity to work together to address voters' concerns about the original Early Voting process. The result is a more familiar voting experience, with ballots inserted directly into tabulators instead of sealed envelopes, just as they are on Election Day.

Reporting opportunity: Visit an Early Voting location to show voters using the new tabulators. Speak with local election officials about the transition and how the new equipment is improving the voting experience.

STORY IDEA 2

Work, Family, Life: 14 Days to Vote Early Two Weekends. Two Late Nights.

For voters juggling work schedules, family responsibilities, transportation challenges or other commitments, Connecticut's 14-day Early Voting period offers more opportunities to vote in person. Early Voting runs from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. October 19-November 1, including two full weekends and extended hours on October 27 and 29, when locations will be open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Why it matters: The story isn't simply that Early Voting exists. It's how Connecticut residents are using it to fit voting into their lives.

Reporting opportunity: Interview voters on weekends or evenings about why Early Voting works for them. Consider speaking with shift workers, parents, seniors, caregivers, and first-time voters.



Looking Ahead: Evaluating Early Voting in Connecticut

As Connecticut enters its third year of Early Voting, our Office continues to gather feedback from local election officials and track voter participation to evaluate how the process is working. With experience from a presidential election, municipal elections and, soon, a midterm election, we will have a more complete picture of how Early Voting is being used and administered across the state. We plan to bring that information to the General Assembly and work together to identify ways to streamline the process, reduce costs and maintain accessible, flexible voting options for Connecticut voters.

STORY IDEA 3

Five College Campuses are Early Voting Locations And They're Not Just for Students

Five of the state's public colleges with residential populations of one thousand or more students will host an Early Voting location: Central, Eastern, Southern, and Western Connecticut State Universities and UConn. **Established by P.A. 25-168** in July 2025, the college sites are designed to make voting more accessible for a community that often does not have access to the transportation needed to travel to a polling location. **But any registered voter in the municipality where the campus is located can cast a ballot there during the Early Voting period.** Eligible residents can also use Same-Day Registration during Early Voting.



Why it matters: This offers a local story with a potentially surprising angle: College campuses are serving as voting locations for their surrounding communities, not just their student populations.

Reporting opportunity: Interview student voters, campus officials, and community residents about access to voting and the role colleges can play in civic participation.

In our 2026 Voter Guide, you'll find a chart that shows where each college in-person Early Voting site is located and which towns' eligible voters can vote there.

ANOTHER STORY WORTH EXPLORING:

Which Connecticut Communities Will Lead the Way in Voter Turnout?

After every election, the Secretary of the State presents the **Democracy Cup** to the Connecticut municipalities with the highest voter turnout. The award has been presented annually since 2000.



In 2024, the Democracy Cup was awarded to Cornwall in the Small-Town category with a turnout of 90.46%; East Hampton in the Medium Town category with a turnout of 89.64%; Fairfield in the Large Town category with a turnout of 84.55%; and Stamford in the City category with a turnout of 73.95%. Which municipalities will lead the way again in 2026? And what are local election officials and community organizations doing to encourage participation this year?

Reporting opportunity: **Revisit previous Democracy Cup winners** and runners-up, speak with local election officials about how they encourage voting, and speak with residents about their communities' voting traditions.



Said Secretary of the State Stephanie Thomas: “Between work, family and everything else on our to-do lists, life can get complicated. Voting doesn’t have to be. Connecticut voters have three ways to cast their ballots — in person during Early Voting, on Election Day or by absentee ballot — so they can choose what works best for them. Our Office works year-round with local election officials to prepare for elections and protect the integrity of the process. And this year, we listened to voters and worked with the Legislature to improve Early Voting. Now, voters will place their completed ballots directly into a tabulator, just as they do on Election Day, giving them a more familiar voting experience and greater confidence in the process.”

QUICK ANSWERS

Commonly Asked Early Voting Questions

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT at my Early Voting location?

When you arrive at the Early Voting location, you will check in and be verified as an eligible voter. After printing and signing your name, you will receive your ballot. After completing your ballot, you will insert it into the tabulator to be counted.

WHAT part of the Early Voting process is new this year?

Voters will insert their completed ballots directly into a tabulator to be counted instead of inside an envelope. Also new is the requirement that voters must both print and sign their name when they check in to vote.

HOW IS EARLY VOTING DIFFERENT from voting by absentee ballot?

Early Voting allows you to cast your ballot in person at an Early Voting location during a specific period of time before Election Day.

HOW MANY EARLY VOTING LOCATIONS does each city or town have?

Each town has at least one Early Voting location. Towns with populations over 20,000 can decide whether to add additional locations. There are also Early Voting locations on several of Connecticut’s public university campuses. To confirm your Early Voting location, visit MyVote.CT.gov the week before Early Voting begins or contact your Registrar of Voters.

DOES THE EARLY VOTING PERIOD include weekends?

Yes! The 14 days of Early Voting for the November 3, 2026 General Election include two weekends, with polls open from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, October 24 and 25, and from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, October 31 and November 1.

HOW DOES CONNECTICUT ENSURE people do not vote twice?

When you cast your ballot during Early Voting, you print and sign your name during check-in, and election officials record that you have voted in the Centralized Voter Registration System. This ensures each voter can only vote once, whether by Early Voting, absentee ballot, or on Election Day.

CAN I REGISTER TO VOTE during the Early Voting period before a general election?

Yes. If proven eligible, you can register and vote on the same day at your town’s Early Voting location. For primary elections, which have different rules, find detailed instructions at MyVote.CT.gov.



**VIEW YOUR SAMPLE BALLOT
WHEN IT IS AVAILABLE**

MyVote.CT.gov/sampleballots



**REGISTER TO VOTE OR
UPDATE YOUR REGISTRATION**

MyVote.CT.gov/register



Websites, Resources, and Contact Information

November 3, 2026 General Election Calendar

2026 Voter Guide

Report Voting Issues

- During Early Voting: (866) 733-2463 or email elections@CT.gov
- On Election Day: (866) 733-2463 or email elections@CT.gov
- Any time to the **Connecticut State Elections Enforcement Commission**: (866) 733-2463 or (866) SEEC-INFO or **through the SEEC website**

Absentee Ballot Information at MyVote.CT.gov/Absentee

Downloadable Early Voting One-Sheets in English & Spanish at Civics101.CT.gov

Office of the Secretary of the State Elections & Voter Information at MyVote.CT.gov

Online Voter Registration at VoterRegistration.CT.gov

Voter Registration Lookup Tool at MyVote.CT.gov/lookup

Election Night Results Reporting

Election Results Archive

Connecticut General Statutes Title 9 – Elections

Miss last week's fact sheet
about absentee voting?
[Download the PDF here.](#)

**Need a quote from Secretary Thomas or other information
from the Office of the Secretary of the State?**

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