



REDISTRICTING | BACKGROUND

Three Legal Challenges:

A special three-judge panel recently ruled that the maps drawn for NC Congressional District 1 and District 12 were illegal and must be redrawn before the next election. The judges said the maps intentionally segregated and packed black voters into the two districts in much higher numbers than previous maps and in higher numbers than needed for black voters to have a fair chance to elect a candidate of their choice, as required by the Voting Rights Act.

Chief Justice John Roberts refused to block the ruling, and the N.C. General Assembly has now redrawn the congressional districts and submitted the new maps to the three-judge panel. They may be approved or rejected. The U.S. Supreme Court could still decide to hear the case on the merits.

In April, a different three-judge panel in federal court will hear *another lawsuit* challenging the state's General Assembly districts. There is also *a third lawsuit* challenging the General Assembly and congressional districts that began in 2011 in state court; it is now on appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court; the NC NAACP, League of Women Voters of NC, A. Philip Randolph Institute, Democracy NC and dozens of individual voters are plaintiffs in that state challenge. Ultimately, all three cases may be combined and heard at the U.S. Supreme Court.

New Primary Dates:

The March 15 primary will continue as planned, except the congressional contests on the ballot will not count. There will be a primary for just the congressional candidates on June 7. Elections officials urge voters to vote for congressional candidates on March 15 in case a court requires the state to abandon the June 7 primary. Any invalid race will not be certified.

Polling Place and Precinct:

A voter's precinct and polling place did not change with this action. The State Board of Elections website has a lookup that can identify your polling place: <http://demnc.co/polls>

Absentee:

Voters with absentee ballots are encouraged to vote for their congressional candidate. If the new map stands, those congressional votes won't be certified and the rest of the ballot is still valid. Absentee voters will then be sent a new ballot for the June 7 congressional vote.

New Maps:

Until the State Board of Elections has a chance to update its public voter information, voters can get an idea of their districts by looking at this map: <http://demnc.co/map>

New Candidate Filing Period and Rules:

A new filing period of (March 16 to March 25) will be opened for congressional candidates. Candidates may run in both the March 15 primary and the June 7 congressional primary; if they win both, they must withdraw from one by a week after the results are certified.

Runoffs Eliminated:

Under the new rules, the candidate with the most votes wins the primary, rather than the top two candidates having a runoff if no one gets more than 40 percent of the vote.

Registration:

If you missed the regular registration deadline for the March 15 primary, you can (a) register during same-day registration during the early voting period (March 3-12) or (b) register up to 25 days before the June 7 primary (May 14).