

# Plurality & Primary Run-off Elections

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Lt. Governor's Office

August 19, 2015

# What is a run-off election?

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- If the top candidate does not obtain a majority of the votes in an election, another election between the top two vote getters is held so one candidate can obtain a majority.

## ELECTION

Thomas Jefferson

40%

Benjamin Franklin

28%

Abigail Adams

31%

Benedict Arnold

1%

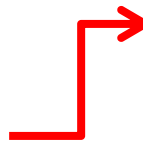
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100%

## RUN-OFF ELECTION

Thomas Jefferson

Abigail Adams



# Run-Off Elections

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- Like all elections, a run-off election would need the following components:
  - Election notice
  - Canvass period
  - Ballots mailed out to military and overseas voters (UOCAVA voters) 45 days before an election

# 2016 Primary Election Calendar

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DATE	STATUTORY REQUIREMENT
May 14, 2016 (45 days before election)	Primary ballots are delivered to military & overseas (UOCAVA) voters.
June 28, 2016	PRIMARY ELECTION
July 12, 2016 (2 weeks after election)	The county canvasses election returns.
July 25, 2016 (4 <sup>th</sup> Monday after election)	The Lt. Governor canvasses statewide & multi-county election returns.
August 31, 2016	The Lt. Governor certifies candidates for general election ballot.
September 24, 2016 (45 days before gen. election)	General election ballots are delivered to military & overseas voters.

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July 12, 2016 (2 weeks after election)	The county canvasses election returns.
July 25, 2016 (4 <sup>th</sup> Monday after election)	The Lt. Governor canvasses statewide & multi-county election returns.
Run-off Election Notice	
Run-off ballots are delivered to military & overseas voters	
RUN-OFF ELECTION	
The county canvasses run-off election returns	
The Lt. Governor canvasses statewide & multi-county run-off election returns.	

# Run-Off Elections

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- Using current election deadlines, there are only 37 days to implement a 72 day election cycle.

- Two options to address this issue:

**Option #1:** Drastically alter and shorten election timelines.

**Option #2:** Institute ranked choice voting for military and overseas voters with minor alterations to election timelines.

# Option #1: Election Timeline

DATE	STATUTORY REQUIREMENT
May 14, 2016 (45 days before primary election)	Primary ballots are delivered to military & overseas (UOCAVA) voters.
June 28, 2016	PRIMARY ELECTION
July 5, 2016 (1 week after primary election)	The county canvasses election returns.
July 7, 2016 (2 days after county canvass)	The Lt. Governor canvasses statewide & multi-county election returns.
July 8, 2016 (3 days after county canvass)	Notice of Run-off Election
July 16, 2016 (45 days before run-off election)	Run-off ballots are delivered to military & overseas (UOCAVA) voters.
August 30, 2016	RUN-OFF ELECTION
September 7, 2016 (1 week after run-off election)	The county canvasses run-off election returns.
September 9, 2016 (2 days after county canvass)	The Lt. Governor canvasses statewide & multi-county election returns.
September 10, 2016 (3 days after county canvass)	The Lt. Governor certifies candidates for general election ballot.
September 24, 2016	General Election ballots are delivered to military & overseas (UOCAVA) voters.

\*This calendar does not account for recounts and election contests.

## Option #2: Ranked Choice Voting for Military Voters

- Two ballots are sent to military and overseas voters prior to the primary election.
- The first ballot, “Ballot A,” would be a regular ballot to be counted at the Primary Election.

**BALLOT A**

Vote for ONE

Thomas Jefferson

George Washington

Abigail Adams



## Option #2: Ranked Choice Voting for Military Voters

- The second ballot, “Ballot B” would be a ranked choice ballot and only used if a run-off were to occur.
- The run-off candidate that has the highest ranked choice on the ballot receives the vote.
- In the example to the right, if Thomas Jefferson and Abigail Adams continued to the run-off election, the vote would go to Abigail Adams.

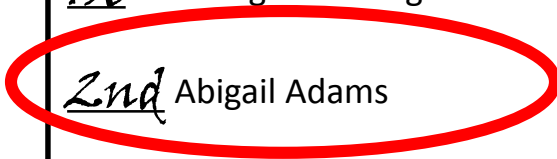
**BALLOT B**

Rank your choices

*3rd* Thomas Jefferson

*1st* George Washington

*2nd* Abigail Adams



# Option #2: Ranked Choice Voting for UOCAVA Voters

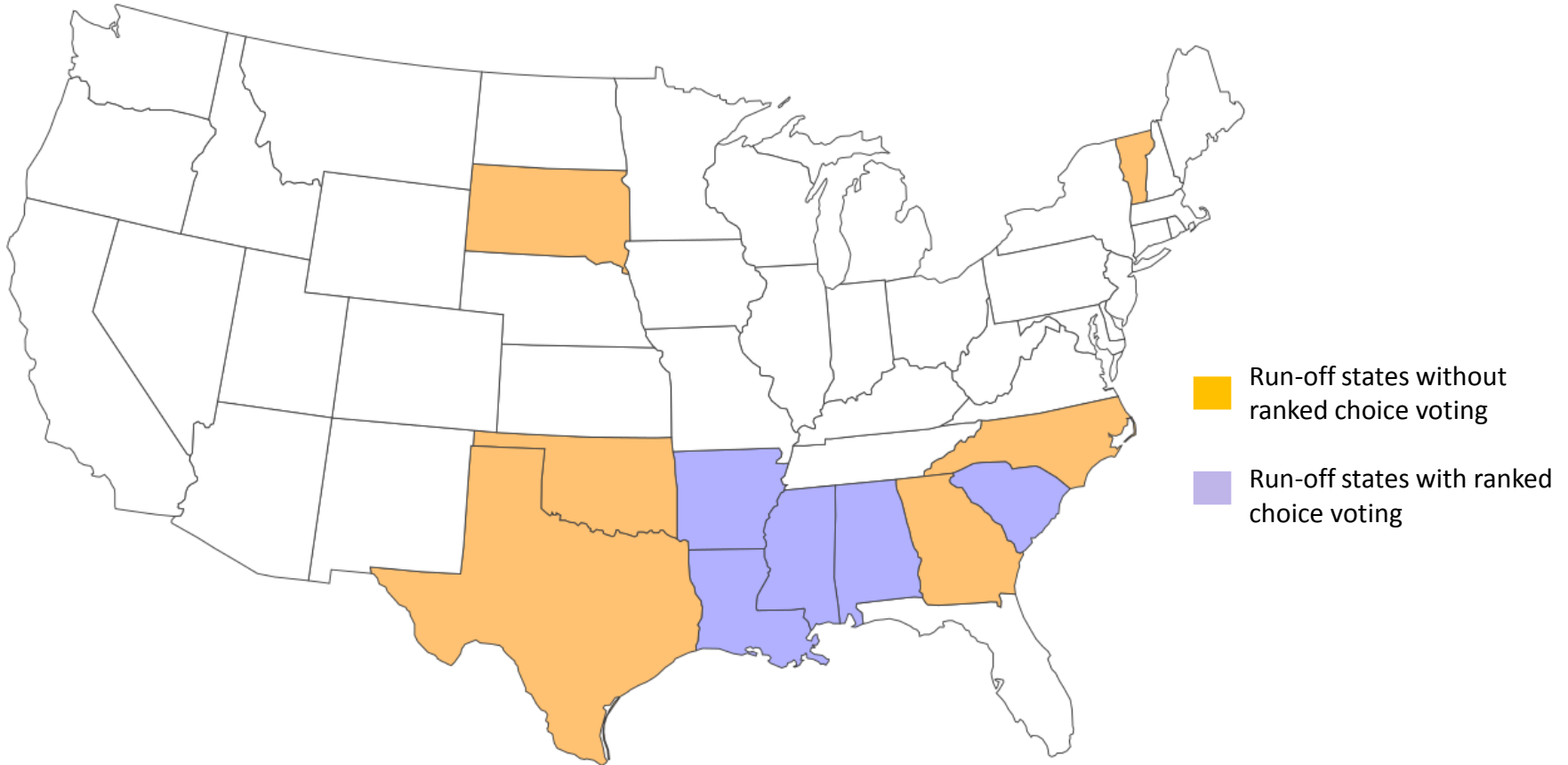
- Ranked choice voting *may* eliminate the need to send a military & overseas ballot 45 days before the run-off election.

DATE	STATUTORY REQUIREMENT
May 14, 2016 (45 days before election)	Primary ballots & run-off ranked choice ballots are delivered to military & overseas (UOCAVA) voters.
June 28, 2016	PRIMARY ELECTION
July 12, 2016 (2 weeks after election)	The county canvasses election returns.
July 25, 2016 (4 <sup>th</sup> Monday after election)	The Lt. Governor canvasses statewide & multi-county election returns.
July 27, 2016	Notice of run-off election.
August 16, 2016	RUN-OFF ELECTION
August 30, 2016	Lt. Governor canvasses the results of the run-off election.
August 31, 2016	The Lt. Governor certifies candidates for general election ballot.
September 24, 2016 (45 days before gen. election)	General election ballots are delivered to military & overseas (UOCAVA) voters.

# Other States

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- 5 states that conduct run-off elections use ranked choice ballots for military & overseas voters:



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# Cost of Policy Solutions to Plurality

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# Cost Estimates

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- \$2.5 million to hold run-off election
  - \$2.25 million cost to counties.
    - Equipment, poll workers, ballots, postage, printing, etc.
  - \$0.25 million cost to state.
    - Software licensing, supplies, I.T. costs, voter database maintenance, voter outreach, etc.
- Ranked Choice Voting
  - Estimated \$20 million - \$30 million.
    - Additional voter outreach: \$200K - \$500K.