

The Election Connection

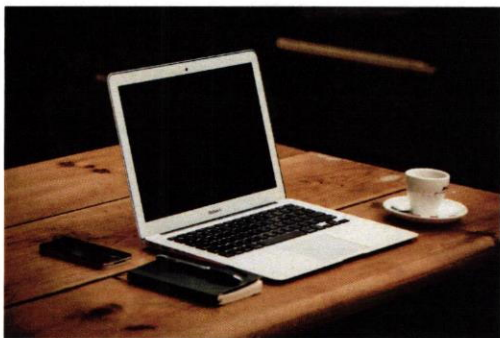
December 2025

Check out our website!

Director Tammy Stafford has worked over the past several months to update the website to include additional content, and make it more attractive, and more user friendly. Visit

https://talbotcountymd.gov/election_board

and let us know what you think!



Reminder- Complete the Statewide Election Judge Interest Application

This application must be completed by all wishing to serve. Additional required forms will be available in early 2026, including the IRS Form W-4, Maryland Form MW-507, the Oath of an Election Judge, and the Rules of Security Behavior.

All interested in serving are reminded that though completion of all forms is required to be considered as an Election Judge, there is no guarantee that all those interested will be assigned to serve.

Talbot County Board of Elections
215 Bay Street, Suite 7
Easton, MD 21601

IMPORTANT DATES & OFFICE CLOSURES

The office will be closed:

12/25/2025- Christmas Day

01/01/2026- New Year's Day



2026 Gubernatorial Primary Early Voting

June 11-18, 2026

Election Day June 23, 2026

2026 Gubernatorial General

Early Voting

October 22-29, 2026

Election Day

November 3, 2026

Phone: 410-770-8099
www.talbotcountymd.gov/election_board
Email: Talbot.Elections@maryland.gov



TRAINING TOOL BOX



DE-ESCALATION

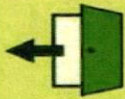
Responses, tips and reminders to help stabilize tense situations. Another sentence here and it carries on and on until it's over.

FIVE PURPOSEFUL ACTIONS



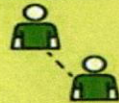
REMAIN CALM

Responses, tips and reminders to help stabilize tense or stressful situations.



CHANGE THE SETTING

If possible, remove people from the area. This could involve parties to the conflict and onlookers.



RESPECT PERSONAL SPACE

Maintain a safe distance and avoid touching the other person.



LISTEN

Give your full attention, nod and ask questions, and avoid changing the subject or interrupting.



EMPATHIZE

Present genuine concern and a willingness to understand without judging.

Source: The Elections Group <https://electionsgroup.com/resource/de-escalation/>



"Cheers to a new year
and another chance for
us to get it right."

— Oprah Winfrey

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DIS-SPELLING THOSE RUMORS!

DID YOU KNOW THAT THE MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS IS COMMITTED TO BEING YOUR TRUSTED SOURCE OF ELECTION INFORMATION? VISIT

[HTTPS://ELECTIONS.MARYLAND.GOV/PRESS_ROOM/RUMOR_CONTROL.HTML](https://elections.maryland.gov/press_room/rumor_control.html)

HERE YOU WILL FIND ACCURATE INFORMATION ON A VARIETY OF ELECTION RELATED TOPICS. THERE ALSO IS A LINK WHERE YOU CAN REPORT ELECTION DIS/MISINFORMATION AND SBE WILL CORRECT THE RECORD.

ELECTION DIS/MISINFORMATION IS INCORRECT OR MISLEADING INFORMATION REGARDING THE TIME, PLACE, OR MANNER OF AN ELECTION, ELECTION RESULTS, OR VOTING RIGHTS.

FROM THE SBE WEBSITE:

RUMOR: I received a ballot by mail or email and can "trade it" to vote in person.

FACT: You can't "trade-in" the ballot you received by mail or email and cast the ballot during early voting or on election day. If you requested a ballot and want to vote in person, you will have to vote a provisional ballot. An election judge will give you a provisional ballot application and a ballot to vote. Your voted ballot will be placed and sealed inside the application envelope and will be counted as long as you don't return the ballot you received by mail or email.

RUMOR: I can bring the ballot I received in the mail or email and cast it during early voting or on election day.

FACT: You can't cast a ballot received by mail or email at a voting location. If you received a ballot in the mail or via email, you must either vote and return that ballot or vote a provisional ballot during early voting or on election day.

Election officials perform audits throughout the entire election process. One of the audits they perform compares the number of ballots issued against the number of ballots counted.

RUMOR: There is a tracking number on each ballot.

FACT: There is not a tracking number on each ballot. There is a tracking number associated with each ballot packet, but not the ballot. The only barcode on the ballot is one used to make sure the correct ballot style is matched to the correct voter.

THE STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS CONTINUES TO MONITOR THE PRESIDENT'S EXECUTIVE ORDERS PERTAINING TO ELECTIONS. VISIT WWW.ELECTIONS.MARYLAND.GOV AND CLICK ON THE QUICK LINK: PRESS ROOM TO STAY INFORMED.

Primary Elections

What is a party primary election?

The Democratic and Republican Parties are required to use primary elections to choose their candidates for the general election. Although it is up to the parties to decide who may vote in their primaries, generally only registered voters affiliated with the Democratic or Republican Parties may vote in that party's primary election.

Can I vote in a party primary election?

Generally, you must be registered with either the Democratic or Republican Party to vote in the primary election. If there are non-partisan offices that are elected in a primary election (i.e., school board), any voter can vote for these offices.

May I change political parties?

Yes, except after the close of advanced voter registration, until voter registration opens up again after an election.

To change your party affiliation, use [Maryland's Online Voter Registration System \(OLVR\)](#) or submit a new [voter registration application](#) or a written request to your [local board of elections](#).

Do I have to affiliate with a political party?

No, you do not. If you do not select a political party on your voter registration application, you will be "unaffiliated" with any political party. This means that you will generally not be able to vote in party primary elections, but you will be able to vote in any nonpartisan primary elections held in your jurisdiction, such as a primary election to select nominees for the board of education.

If I apply to register to vote before my 18th birthday and the primary election is before I turn 18, can I vote in the primary election?

Yes, if you will be 18 years old or older by the general election and you are registered to vote with the Democratic or Republican Party.

Source: SBE Website



"Always have an attitude of gratitude."

- Sterling K. Brown,
American Actor



A Little Trivia Please...

The United States is the only country to have won a medal at every Olympic Winter Games.

A snowflake has six sides.



(Source: kraftylab.com)

Important Reminder

An Election Judge may NOT be a candidate, hold a public or political office including a State, county, or party central committee or chairman, or serve as a campaign manager for a candidate or as the treasurer for a campaign finance entity.

Election Law §2-301

Did You Know?????

'Jingle Bells' was the first song ever broadcast from space. It was played by Gemini 6 astronauts Wally Schirra on harmonica and Tom Stafford on sleigh bells in December 1965.

(Source: history.com)



COMING APRIL 2026

The Talbot County Board of Elections is working on the final revisions to the 2026 Election Judge Manual. Thank you to Director of Tourism and Election Judge Cassandra Vanhooser for the photo that has been selected by the State Board of Elections workgroup for the front cover!

Election Judge training sessions are tentatively scheduled for APRIL 2026. Once plans are solidified a Training Sign-Up will be sent via email.

Tis the season to think of others. Visit www.feedtalbot.org for a list of Talbot County Food Pantries and other resources.



REMINDER

The Talbot County Board of Elections is recruiting Election Judges in an effort to ensure that our polling places are as party balanced as possible. In addition to assigning Election Judges at each polling place, we attempt to recruit a pool of STAND-BY Judges to fill unexpected vacancies and you may be asked to serve in this capacity if necessary. Also, while we try to assign Election Judges to their home polling places, this often is not possible. Election Judges may be asked to work at any polling place in Talbot County.

Interest in serving as an Election Judge during the 2026 Election Cycle may exceed our need. If you are not assigned, your information will be held for the next Election Cycle.

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**Talbot County Board of Elections staff
wish you a safe and healthy holiday
season and a very happy 2026!**

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