



## 104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

HB1708

Introduced 1/28/2025, by Rep. Kam Buckner

#### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

10 ILCS 5/16-5.01

from Ch. 46, par. 16-5.01

10 ILCS 5/16-5.02 new

Amends the Ballots Article of the Election Code. Provides that the governing body of a municipality may adopt, upon submission of a written statement by the municipality's election authority attesting to the administrative ability of the election authority to administer an election using a ranked ballot to the municipality's governing body, an ordinance requiring a ranked vote by mail ballot for municipal and township office candidates to be voted on in the consolidated election or consolidated primary election (rather than only the consolidated election). Provides that the governing body of a municipality may adopt an ordinance allowing any qualified voter to use a ranked vote by mail ballot for any municipal and township election. Sets forth provisions concerning ranked ballots for nonpartisan primary elections. Removes language providing that a ranked ballot shall be for use only by a qualified voter who either is a member of the United States military or will be outside of the United States on the consolidated primary election day and the consolidated election day. Effective January 1, 2026.

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1 AN ACT concerning elections.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The Election Code is amended by changing  
5 Section 16-5.01 and by adding Section 16-5.02 as follows:

6 (10 ILCS 5/16-5.01) (from Ch. 46, par. 16-5.01)

7 Sec. 16-5.01. (a) Except as otherwise provided in this  
8 Code, the election authority shall, at least 46 days prior to  
9 the date of any election at which federal officers are elected  
10 and 45 days prior to any other regular election, have a  
11 sufficient number of ballots printed so that such ballots will  
12 be available for mailing 45 days prior to the date of the  
13 election to persons who have filed application for a ballot  
14 under the provisions of Article 20 of this Code.

15 (b) If at any election at which federal offices are  
16 elected or nominated the election authority is unable to  
17 comply with the provisions of subsection (a), the election  
18 authority shall mail to each such person, in lieu of the  
19 ballot, a Special Write-in Vote by Mail Voter's Blank Ballot.  
20 The Special Write-in Vote by Mail Voter's Blank Ballot shall  
21 be used at all elections at which federal officers are elected  
22 or nominated and shall be prepared by the election authority  
23 in substantially the following form:

1 Special Write-in Vote by Mail Voter's Blank Ballot

2 (To vote for a person, write the title of the office and  
3 his or her name on the lines provided. Place to the left of and  
4 opposite the title of office a square and place a cross (X) in  
5 the square.)

6 Title of Office Name of Candidate

7 ( )

8 ( )

9 ( )

10 ( )

11 ( )

12 ( )

13 The election authority shall send with the Special  
14 Write-in Vote by Mail Voter's Blank Ballot a list of all  
15 referenda for which the voter is qualified to vote and all  
16 candidates for whom nomination papers have been filed and for  
17 whom the voter is qualified to vote. The voter shall be  
18 entitled to write in the name of any candidate seeking  
19 election and any referenda for which he or she is entitled to  
20 vote.

21 On the back or outside of the ballot, so as to appear when  
22 folded, shall be printed the words "Official Ballot", the date  
23 of the election and a facsimile of the signature of the  
24 election authority who has caused the ballot to be printed.

25 The provisions of Article 20, insofar as they may be  
26 applicable to the Special Write-in Vote by Mail Voter's Blank

1 Ballot, shall be applicable herein.

2 (c) Notwithstanding any provision of this Code or other  
3 law to the contrary, the governing body of a municipality may  
4 adopt, upon submission of a written statement by the  
5 municipality's election authority attesting to the  
6 administrative ability of the election authority to administer  
7 an election using a ranked ballot to the municipality's  
8 governing body, an ordinance requiring, and that  
9 municipality's election authority shall prepare, a ranked vote  
10 by mail ballot for municipal and township office candidates to  
11 be voted on in the consolidated election or consolidated  
12 primary election. This ranked ballot shall be for use ~~only~~ by a  
13 qualified voter who either is a member of the United States  
14 military or will be outside of the United States on the  
15 consolidated primary election day and the consolidated  
16 election day. The governing body of a municipality may adopt  
17 an ordinance allowing any qualified voter to use a ranked vote  
18 by mail ballot for any municipal and township election. The  
19 ranked ballot shall contain a list of the titles of all  
20 municipal and township offices potentially contested at both  
21 the consolidated primary election and the consolidated  
22 election and the candidates for each office and shall permit  
23 the elector to vote in the consolidated election by indicating  
24 his or her order of preference for each candidate for each  
25 office. To indicate his or her order of preference for each  
26 candidate for each office, the voter shall put the number one

1 next to the name of the candidate who is the voter's first  
2 choice, the number 2 for his or her second choice, and so forth  
3 so that, in consecutive numerical order, a number indicating  
4 the voter's preference is written by the voter next to each  
5 candidate's name on the ranked ballot. The voter shall not be  
6 required to indicate his or her preference for more than one  
7 candidate on the ranked ballot. The voter may not cast a  
8 write-in vote using the ranked ballot for the consolidated  
9 election. The election authority shall, if using the ranked  
10 vote by mail ballot authorized by this subsection, also  
11 prepare instructions for use of the ranked ballot. The ranked  
12 ballot for the consolidated election shall be mailed to the  
13 voter at the same time that the ballot for the consolidated  
14 primary election is mailed to the voter and the election  
15 authority shall accept the completed ranked ballot for the  
16 consolidated election when the authority accepts the completed  
17 ballot for the consolidated primary election.

18 The voter shall also be sent a vote by mail ballot for the  
19 consolidated election for those races that are not related to  
20 the results of the consolidated primary election as soon as  
21 the consolidated election ballot is certified.

22 The State Board of Elections shall adopt rules for  
23 election authorities for the implementation of this  
24 subsection, including, but not limited to, the application for  
25 and counting of ranked ballots.

26 (Source: P.A. 102-15, eff. 6-17-21; 103-154, eff. 6-30-23.)

1 (10 ILCS 5/16-5.02 new)

2 Sec. 16-5.02. Ranked ballot; nonpartisan primary  
3 elections.

4 (a) The State Board of Elections is authorized to adopt  
5 rules mandating all election authorities to conduct all State,  
6 local, and federal primary elections, excluding the  
7 presidential primary, using a ranked ballot method.

8 (b) This Section applies only if more than 2 candidates  
9 have been nominated for an office.

10 (c) All qualified voters shall be permitted to vote for  
11 the candidate of their choice in a primary election regardless  
12 of their political party affiliation.

13 (d) Any person who meets the primary election  
14 qualifications may petition as a candidate in a primary  
15 election as a member of the political party in which the  
16 candidate is registered.

17 (e) All candidates shall be listed on a single primary  
18 ballot. The ballot shall clearly designate the party in which  
19 each candidate is registered. The top 2 candidates as  
20 determined by the ranked ballot method shall advance to the  
21 general election regardless of political party affiliation.  
22 The winner of the election shall be the candidate that  
23 receives the greatest number of votes cast in the general  
24 election.

25 (f) For offices subject to the ranked ballot method, the

1 ballot shall be simple and easy to understand and allow a voter  
2 to rank candidates for an office based on preference.

3 (g) Instructions on the ballot shall conform substantially  
4 to the following specifications:

5 "Vote for candidates by indicating your first-choice  
6 candidates in order of preference. Indicate your first  
7 choice by marking the number "1" beside a candidate's  
8 name, your second choice by marking the number "2" beside  
9 a candidate's name, your third choice by marking a number  
10 "3" beside a candidate's name, and so on in ascending  
11 numerical order.

12 You may choose to rank only one candidate, but ranking  
13 additional candidates will not hurt the chances of your  
14 first-choice candidate. You may not rank more than 5  
15 candidates. Do not mark the same number beside more than  
16 one candidate. Do not skip numbers."

17 (h) A sample ballot for an office subject to the ranked  
18 ballot method shall illustrate the voting procedure for the  
19 ranked ballot method. A sample ballot shall be included with  
20 each absentee ballot.

21 (i) The State Board of Elections shall conduct a voter  
22 education campaign on the ranked ballot system to familiarize  
23 voters with the ballot design, method of voting, and  
24 advantages of determining a majority winner in a single  
25 election.

26 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect January

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