



August 3, 2018

Primary Election on August 14

The last significant hurdle before the general election comes on Tuesday, August 14, as voters from both major parties will vote for the candidates from their party they would like to see on the general election ballot in November. This year is particularly significant in Minnesota — with an open gubernatorial race, two US Senate elections, an open attorney general race and secretary of state race, and every member of both the US and state House of Representatives on the ballot. The number of competitive races in the state will make Minnesota a national focal point of the 2018 midterm election, with national money likely to pour into the state as the calendar turns to fall.

The Minnesota secretary of state's website offers a number of useful links to help residents prepare for the primary elections:

View your [sample ballot](#) by using your zip code and house number.

Find your polling location by using the [poll finder](#).

Minnesota allows [same day voter registration if you bring the proper materials](#).

Early voting is open until August 13; here is how you can [vote early in person](#).

August 1 New Laws

The 90th Minnesota Legislature adjourned *sine die* on Sunday, May 20, but almost all laws passed by a legislature do not take effect until a later date. A significant number of new laws became effective on Wednesday, August 1, including:

- Requiring residential contractors and insurance adjusters to provide

consumers with written notification in the initial home repair estimate that they cannot cover any part of the insurance deductible. Residential contractors cannot build the deductible into their estimates;

- Changes to the internal policies of state-chartered credit unions, allowing for electronic voting on resolutions (among other provisions);
- Establishing a real estate advisory board to serve as connection between the community and the Department of Commerce;
- Granting unmarried couples the same rights as divorced couples in child custody process;
- Child care providers no longer have to post the correction orders handed down from the Department of Human Services;
- Child care providers are exempt from positive support strategies rule. Instead, they must follow the child's individual child care program plan or individualized education program under existing Minnesota law.

View a complete list of the [laws taking effect on August 1](#), or view a list of every [law passed in the 2018 legislative session](#).

State Bond Rating Improves

The office of Minnesota Management and Budget recently announced that the state's bond rating has improved with two independent rating services, giving the state its best bond rating since 2011. Independent rating services — Standard and Poor's, Fitch Ratings and Moody's Investors Service — have given Minnesota a AAA, AAA and Aa1 rating respectively. An improvement to the state's bond rating is an indication to investors that Minnesota is a safe investment risk, meaning investors will accept lower rates of return on their investments.

According to MMB commissioner Myron Frans, the improved bond rating is largely due to the passage of the omnibus pension bill earlier this year, which eliminated \$3.4 billion of the state's unfunded pension liabilities and put the state on track to fully fund the state's pension system within 30 years.

This reduced rate of return means the state will have lower interest rates and reduce the cost of borrowing when crafting a bonding bill. The legislature generally passes a bonding bill every even-numbered year, and passed an \$825 million bonding bill in May.

Legislative Toolbox: Show Me the Money

Every election season comes with financial reports of campaign contributions and information about the financial positions of Political Action Committees (PACs). Campaign finance regulations can be confusing to navigate and understand, so the Ewald Consulting government relations team has developed a guide to Minnesota's campaign finance rules, [Show me the Money](#).

They Said It

"Our state government has made a complete financial turnaround in the past seven-and-a-half years. The credit for Minnesota's success belongs to the people of our state. I thank Minnesotans for their many contributions to the strength of our economy and the stabilization of our state's budget."

- Gov. Mark Dayton, on Minnesota's improved bond rating

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