

# Primary elections explained

Why aren't all the candidates on the same ballot? I've got Republicans and Democrats that I support, why can't I support them both in this primary?

These are frequent questions you can hear around Greene County when discussing politics and the upcoming Party Primary Elections.

The answers are not simple ones and can cause as much confusion as the primary system itself can generate among voters. To follow is a brief outline of the primary system that will hopefully clear up some of the questions voters have.

The USA is one of the only nations which uses a primary system, and the issues and advantages of the open primary are often a subject of debate in American politics, especially during election season.

In a primary election, voters indicate their preference for a candidate of a particular party to advance to the race for an office. For example, a voter might indicate his or her support for Green Party candidate X over all the other potential Green Party candidates. If that candidate wins enough votes at the primary, he or she will compete against candidates from other parties.

The primary system is most commonly used for Presidential elections, because it allows each political party to get an idea of what kind of support a candidate has nationwide.

The idea of holding primaries before general elections arose in the early 20th century, when the Progressive movement in America was trying to empower the populace. Advocates of the system proposed that using primaries would put more power into the hands of the people, instead of concentrating it with the political parties. An open primary reflects these ideals, since it allows voters more input in

nominating a candidate.

Because there is generally no ready proof of a voter's intentions, FairVote and the National Conference of State Legislatures classify Mississippi's primary elections as open.

When qualifying for a state or candidate election, candidates must declare if they are running on the Democratic or Republican ticket, or if they will be running as an Independent or other party candidate.

The local Democratic and Republican Executive Committees then conduct primary elections to choose their overall candidate to represent the party in the General Election. Independent candidates automatically advance to the November General Election.

In Mississippi, a primary candidate must win a majority of the votes cast for the office he or she is seeking in order to secure the nomination. If no candidate for an office wins a majority of votes cast in the primary, a runoff election between the top two vote-getters is held.

An open primary is a primary election in which voters may cast votes on a ballot of any party. This distinguishes it from a closed primary, another type of primary election in which voters are limited by party affiliation.

A related concept, the blanket primary, allows voters to vote for candidates of any party.

In a classic closed primary, voters declare a political party when they register to vote and when they go to the polls on election day a registered Democratic receives a Democratic ballot, a Republican receives a Republican ballot, and so forth.

In an open primary, a voter may request a ballot from any political party, regardless of his or her personal party affiliation. Greene County voters will vote in this manner on Aug. 3

In a blanket primary, a voter receives a general "blanket" ballot which allows him or her to vote for any candidate from any party. This would allow a voter to support a Libertarian candidate for President while simultaneously voicing preference for a Peace and Freedom gubernatorial candidate, for example. The blanket primary is a natural extension of the open primary system, but very few states use it.

It is not uncommon for voters from one party to request the ballot of an opposing party and vote for the weakest candidate in the hopes of nominating that weaker candidate to the race for office. An open primary allows voters to easily defect from their stated party affiliation. Independents and people who have no party affiliation appreciate the open primary, as it allows them to participate in the democratic process without allying themselves to a particular political party.

In Mississippi, the only restriction with its open primary is when a runoff election is needed. In those cases, only voters who voted in that party's primary election — along with voters who did not vote in any of the earlier primaries — can cast a ballot in the runoff election. That means if you voted in the Republican primary, you can only vote in Republican runoffs and not in Democratic runoffs. If you did not vote in any of the primary elections, then you would be eligible to vote in any of the runoffs, but you must vote in only one party's runoff and not in both.

This often becomes an issue at the local level when someone has voted in one party's primary but then wants to vote in the other party's runoff in order to support a local candidate. That would not be allowed under this scenario.



I'm Jay Hughes, and I want to be your next Lieutenant Governor so that we can create a legislature **where all eighty-two counties matter** and democracy for all people means something. I've enjoyed my visits and school tours in Greene County, and I'll look out for you. I share your concerns about the prison.

I'm an **active-duty military veteran**, just like my dad. I have a lifetime of experiences, as well as a public education, that will allow me to **make Mississippi even better for everyone**, not just the lucky few or well-connected.

**Imagine**  
*an even better Mississippi!*

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*For Real, Positive Change*

**VOTE FOR**

**LONNIE ALTON**

**'Lil Al'**

**ROBERTS**

**SUPERVISOR**

**DISTRICT 5**

## To the Voters of Greene County's District 5,

I, Lonnie A. Roberts II, would like to ask for your support and vote on Aug. 6th for District 5 Supervisor. I was born and raised in Greene County and graduated in 1997 from Greene County High School.

In 2004, I married my wife, JoLeAn. We are blessed with two daughters, Jodilyn and Julie Roberts.

We are Christians and are active members of Unity Baptist Church.

We own Lil Al's Tree Service and have been providing services for Greene County for the last fifteen years. We previously owned Diamond R Farm Supply for ten years prior to selling it in 2017. Operating these businesses has given me some valuable experiences, motivating me to desire more for our county. Our county has great potential and with the right leadership, the opportunities could be endless.

Let's face the facts! Our county has very few jobs and can't support the work force. It's heartbreaking to see how many leave our county so they can work to provide for their families.

I would greatly appreciate the chance to help make our county a better place for our children and grandchildren.

If it's God's will and I am to be elected Supervisor for District 5, my sole purpose will be to make our county a better place. I intend on working with economic developmental groups and other supervisors in an effort to accomplish these changes. I want to use every resource available in an effort to pursue new industry for our community. I would like to see the railroad utilized for new growth and to help our existing businesses thrive.

Education is also an important concern. I am passionate about exploring new ideas to bring in more revenue to help our schools.

I also understand the importance of managing and maintaining our roads.

I am not a lazy person and I will work hard to accomplish these changes. My hearts desire is to make a positive difference. On Aug. 6th, if you vote Lil Al Roberts for District 5 Supervisor, I will work hard to make our county a better place to live.

*Thank you for your consideration.*  
Lonnie A. 'Lil Al' Roberts II