



# Ballot Vocabulary

## Federal

Congress	U.S. Congress consists of the U.S. House of Representatives and US Senate. This is known as a “bicameral” legislature, meaning it has two parts. Typically, “Congress” refers to the federal legislature, not the state.
Presidential Candidate	A person seeking election to the office of U.S. President who either has met the legal requirements to have their name printed on the ballot or is eligible to have their name written in by a voter and counted as that voter’s choice for president.
U.S. Representative	An elected official who represents a congressional district within a state at the federal level. Together with the U.S. Senate, the House of Representatives pass or defeat federal legislation (laws). Representatives are elected every 2 years. Maine has 2 representatives in the US House of Representatives. The number of Representatives each state has depends on population.
U.S. Senator	An elected official who represents their entire state at the federal level. Together, with the members of the members of the U.S. House of Representatives, U.S. senators pass or defeat federal legislation. Maine has 2 Senators that are elected to the U.S. Senate every 6 years.

## State

Governor	The leader of the state executive branch and commander in chief of each state. Governors implement laws, nominate officials, oversee the functioning of state government, and act as the liaison between state and federal government. The Governor of Maine is elected every 4 years and cannot serve more than 2 consecutive terms.
Referendum Question	Proposals to enact new laws or constitutional amendments that are placed on the ballot for approval or rejection by voters.
State Representative	An elected official who represents a district within their state at the state level. Together with State Senate, Representatives pass or defeat state legislation (laws). Representatives are elected every 2 years. Maine has 151 Representatives.
State Senator	An elected official who represents their district at the state level. State Senate and the House of Representatives pass or defeat state legislation. State Senators are elected every 2 years in Maine. Maine has 35 State Senators.

## Local

County Commissioner	An elected official that works on a board of 3, 5, or 7 commissioners within a Maine county to oversee the operation of all county offices. Each commissioner oversees a district within the county. These positions are elected every 4 years.
County Treasurer	The elected official that maintains the financial and tax records for a county. This position is elected every 4 years.
District Attorney	The elected official that prosecutes criminal activity in their district or county. Maine has 8 districts, many of which include several counties. This position is elected every 4 years.
Judge of Probate	The elected official for each county who acts as the judge of the county probate court. Probate court handles the estates of deceased and missing persons, guardianship, trusts, legal name changes, adoption, and family matters. The Judge of Probate must be an attorney of law licensed to practice in Maine. This official is elected every 4 years.
Register of Deeds	The elected official responsible for maintaining all land and real estate records for a county. These records include deeds, mortgages, liens, bankruptcies, leases, and plan maps. This official is elected every 4 years.
Register of Probate	The elected official that oversees the day to day operations of each county's probate court. This official is elected every 4 years.
Sheriff	The elected official that serves as the chief law enforcement officer in each county. Sheriff's oversee law enforcement, jail administration, and court services. This position is elected every 4 years.

This list is adapted from the Election Assistance Commission's glossary of terms. For a complete list of Election related terms go to [https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/glossary\\_files/Glossary\\_of\\_Election\\_Terms\\_EAC.pdf](https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/glossary_files/Glossary_of_Election_Terms_EAC.pdf) or search "EAC Glossary of Election Terms"