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Virginia Primary Election Preview

In 2021, the Old Dominion state will hold key state elections for its three statewide executive branch offices – governor, lieutenant governor and attorney general – as well as for the House of Delegates.

****For all ERIE Virginia employees, here is key primary voting information and a preview of the state's primary election season.****

VIRGINIA'S PRIMARY ELECTION: KEY VOTER DEADLINES

The Primary Election is less than a month away on Tuesday, June 8, and will feature Democratic executive branch primaries and House of Delegates primaries for both parties.

Election Day, Tuesday, June 8, 2021

- Polls are open on Election Day from 6 A.M. - 7 P.M.
- Last day to [register to vote](#): May 17, 2021
- Last day to [request a mail-in or absentee ballot](#): May 28, 2021
- A further resource: APCIA, ERIE's national trade association, has a website that can facilitate your registration and provide information about the candidates. Please visit: <https://voiceofamericasinsurers.org/apciavotes/>

OVERVIEW OF THE 2021 VIRGINIA PRIMARY SEASON

Virginia has been trending Democratic the past few decades and in the past 10 years has gone from purple to reliably blue. The GOP has not won a statewide election in Virginia since 2009, and Democrats control both houses of the General Assembly along with executive branch. Republicans hope to break this trifecta of control this fall with a voter backlash against what they term "overreach" and "one-party control." However, that could be a tough challenge given the state's long-term political transformation.

Democratic Executive Branch – Primary June 8

While Republican executive branch candidates were selected over the weekend using a convention process (more below), the Democratic executive branch candidates for three offices will be on the ballot on June 8 as follows – links are to the official campaign websites:

- Governor
Gov. Ralph Northam is term-limited with a cast of five Democrats vying to replace him, including the clear favorite, [former Gov. Terry McAuliffe](#), who leads in name recognition, funding, and establishment backing. Polling has shown him with a 47% lead among registered voters, with none of his four opponents cracking double-digits. Those four include current [Lt. Gov. Justin Fairfax](#), state [Sen. Jennifer McClellan](#) from the Richmond area, and [former Del. Jennifer Carroll Floy](#) from Prince William County in the far D.C. suburbs, as well as state [Del. Lee Carter](#), also from Prince William County.

- **Lieutenant Governor**

There are six Democrats looking to replace Fairfax with a majority of voters polling as undecided:

- [Del. Haya Ayala](#), a former community activist from Prince William County, has been endorsed by Gov. Northam and House leadership;
- [Del. Sam Rasoul](#) from Roanoke would lead the field in fundraising;
- [Del. Mark Levine](#) from Alexandria would be the first openly gay statewide elected official;
- [Andria McClellan](#), a Norfolk City Council member, is the only candidate from Hampton Roads;
- [Xavier Warren](#) is a business owner from Arlington County; and,
- [Sean Perryman](#) is the former head of the NAACP's Fairfax County chapter.

- **Attorney General**

The race for the Democratic AG nomination has only two candidates: incumbent [AG Mark Herring](#) is the current favorite over upstart candidate [Del. Jerrauld "Jay" Jones](#) from Norfolk.

Gov. Northam recently threw his support to Jones, who is nearly 30 years Herring's junior and would also become the state's first African American AG. Despite the backing, Jones still faces an uphill climb according to a recent poll – 42% Herring to 18% Jones with 34% of voters undecided.

House of Delegates – Primary June 8

Democrats won control of the House of Delegates in 2019 by a 55-45 margin and have taken advantage to push for long-term party priorities. During the last two sessions, the legislative environment has shifted significantly towards defense for the business community and insurers.

Republicans are aiming to take back House control in the fall, despite the obvious challenges of recent voting trends in the populous areas. With a record 13 Democrats in primary challenges, many of which are from further left, the GOP is hoping for June results that may allow them to win back centrist suburban swing voters in November. Meanwhile, only three Republicans are facing challengers on June 8.

It also bears mentioning that Virginia could face a unique situation in terms of redistricting in 2021. Given the COVID-19 related delay in U.S. Census data, the state will not get to its special redistricting legislative session until the fall, and so may face the prospect of having state House elections three years in a row. Virginia is also switching to a new hybrid, bipartisan legislator-citizen redistricting commission for the first time, so there is much uncertainty about how the redistricting process will shake out and impact the House of Delegates.

GOP Executive Branch – Selected at May 8 Convention

As noted, the three Republican executive branch candidates were selected at a convention over the weekend. The field of many candidates was narrowed to the following slate for the November election. (Note: While there may be potential recounts and audits, these are the declared winners as of May 11):

- **Governor** - [Glenn Youngkin](#), former co-chief executive of the Carlyle Group, won the Republican nomination out of a field of seven candidates. Touting himself as a political outsider, the relatively unknown Youngkin bested second-place finisher Pete Snyder, another businessman, as well as self-described "Trump in heels" state Sen. Amanda Chase, former state House Speaker Del. Kirk Cox, and several others.
- **Lieutenant Governor** – [Winsome Sears](#), a former state Delegate, U.S. Marine pilot and prior U.S. House candidate, held off five others including runner-up former Del. Tim Hugo. The Jamaican-

born Sears immigrated to the United States as a child and is the first black female to win the GOP nomination for this office.

- **Attorney General** – Delegate [Jason Miyares](#) won the party's nomination 52% to 48% over Chuck Smith in a close race that also included two other candidates. Miyares is a former criminal prosecutor from the Virginia Beach area and was the first Cuban American elected to the Virginia General Assembly.

Each of these three Republican candidates will face off in November against a Democratic counterpart above to be elected on June 8. **Please use the links above to get informed and participate in the June primary and the November general elections.** Make your voice heard.