



Municipal Runoff Elections

**City Council Election Reform Task Force
May 13, 2010 – 2:00 p.m.**

Runoff, or two-round, election systems –

The two-round system (also known as second ballot or runoff voting) is a voting system used to elect a single winner. Under runoff voting, the voter casts a single vote for their chosen candidate. However, if no candidate receives an absolute majority of votes, then those candidates having less than a certain proportion of the votes, or all but the two candidates receiving the most votes, are eliminated, and a second round of voting occurs.

Pros:

- results in a prevailing candidate with a majority of support
- allows voters to have a second chance to vote for their favored candidate or to change their minds between rounds of voting
- can encourage diverse interests to coalesce around a candidate
- can reduce problems associated with ‘split voting’

Cons:

- second round of voting can be more expensive and administratively burdensome
- in primaries, prolongs uncertainty before a general election; in a general election, prolongs uncertainty before a transition

Oklahoma Statutes

Title 26. Elections

Article I - **State and County Elections** - Political Parties

Section 1-103 - Runoff Primary Election

If at any Primary Election no candidate for the nomination for office of any political party receives a majority of all votes cast for all candidates of such party for the office, no candidate shall be nominated by such party for the office, but **the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes at such election shall be placed on the official ballot as candidates for such nomination at a Runoff Primary Election** to be held on the fourth Tuesday of August in the same year. No county, municipality or school district shall schedule an election on any date during the twenty (20) days immediately preceding the date of any such Runoff Primary Election.

Examples of prevailing campaigns with less than a majority of votes cast:

Mayor:

2009 General Election	
Bartlett	45%
Adelson	36%
Perkins	18%
Kirkpatrick	1%

2006 Republican Primary	
LaFortune	43%
Medlock	34%
Miller	22%
Harper	2%

Council:

2009 General Election – District 3	
Turner	46%
Patrick	39%
Hulcher	15%

2006 Republican Primary – District 4	
R. Bartlett	46%
Brinkley	37%
Morlan	17%

2005 Special Election – District 5	
Martinson	28.9%
Phillips	28.6%
Harer	27%
Nichols	10%
Weaver	3%
Harjo	1%
Jackson	1%

2002 Democratic Primary – District 1	
Williams	48%
McConnell	19%
Jeffrey	13%
Jacobs	7%
Littles	7%
Alexander	6%

2002 Republican Primary – District 9	
Neal	48%
Henke	41%
Lowry	5%
Nelson	3%
Apple	3%

(Percentages may total more than 100% due to rounding.)

Other Cities

1. Partisan Primary Runoff

New York City

“In the city of New York, when no candidate for the office of mayor, public advocate or comptroller receives forty percent or more of the votes cast by the members of a political party for such office in a city-wide primary election, the board of elections of such city shall conduct a run-off primary election between the two candidates receiving the greatest number of votes for the same office.”

2. Nonpartisan General Election Serves as Runoff Election

Oklahoma City

“At any primary election when there are two or more candidates for the office of Councilmember in any ward, then the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes for such office shall be declared the nominees from that ward, and when there are two or more candidates for Mayor, the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes from the City at-large shall be declared the nominees for Mayor, and the names of the candidates for Councilmember or for Mayor so nominated shall appear accordingly on the City general election ballot and shall be designated thereon as ‘Nominees of the Primary.’”

3. Nonpartisan – No Primary / General Election Runoff

Fort Worth

“Primary elections to determine the selection of nominees for members of the City Council shall not be resorted to. There shall be but one (1) election, and that a general election, for the purpose of selecting members of the City Council, . . .” “The candidates receiving the majority of the votes cast for each place shall be declared elected. If no candidate receives a majority, or if there is a tie for any one (1) place, the mayor shall order a second election to be held on a date in compliance with the Texas Election Code to fill that place. Only the names of the candidates who tie for the highest number of votes cast for that place, or the two (2) candidates who receive the highest number of votes with neither having a majority of the votes cast for that place, shall be printed on the ballot for such election.”

4. Instant Runoff or Ranked-Choice Voting

Minneapolis

“The elected officers shall be elected by the method of Single Transferable Vote, sometimes known as Ranked Choice Voting or Instant Runoff Voting. The City Council shall, by ordinance, establish the ballot format and rules for counting the votes.”

Instant Runoff or Ranked-Choice Voting is a voting system that guarantees majority winners in a single round of voting by allowing voters rank a list or group of candidates in order of preference

- **Aspen, CO**
- **Berkeley, CA**
- **Memphis, TN**
- **Minneapolis, MN**
- **Oakland, CA**
- **San Francisco, CA**
- **Springfield, IL**
- **St, Paul, MD**
- **Takoma Park , MD**

It is optional in North Carolina, Colorado, Santa Fe, Sarasota, FL, and Vancouver, WA

HOW INSTANT RUNOFF VOTING WORKS

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- ▶ Rank candidates
1, 2, 3...
- ▶ (It's best to use all
of your rankings)



Voters Rank
Preferences

HOW INSTANT RUNOFF VOTING WORKS

- ▶ Rank candidates
1, 2, 3...
- ▶ (It's best to use all
of your rankings)



**Voters Rank
Preferences**



Count the Votes
for each voter's highest
ranked candidate that hasn't
been eliminated

HOW INSTANT RUNOFF VOTING WORKS

- ▶ Rank candidates 1, 2, 3...
- ▶ (It's best to use all of your rankings)



Voters Rank Preferences



Count the Votes

for each voter's highest ranked candidate that hasn't been eliminated



Is There a Majority?

Yes



Declare a Winner

- ▶ Majority winners without need for a low-turnout, expensive runoff election
- ▶ More choices for voters, with less incentives for negative campaigns

HOW INSTANT RUNOFF VOTING WORKS

- ▶ Rank candidates 1, 2, 3...
- ▶ (It's best to use all of your rankings)



Voters Rank Preferences



Eliminate Candidate with Lowest Number of Votes

Redistribute Votes from Eliminated Candidate to Voters' Next Choices



Count the Votes

for each voter's highest ranked candidate that hasn't been eliminated

No



Is There a Majority?

Yes

- ▶ Majority winners without need for a low-turnout, expensive runoff election
- ▶ More choices for voters, with less incentives for negative campaigns



Declare a Winner

OFFICIAL BALLOT
CITY GENERAL ELECTION BALLOT

Judge Judge

Minneapolis Municipal Election Ballot

STATE OF MINNESOTA NOVEMBER 3, 2009 CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS

Ranked Choice Voting

Instructions

How to make your candidate choice

1. Pick your first choice candidate and completely fill in the oval next to that candidate under First Choice, like this:



Correct:
Correct: Choose different candidates in different columns.

• CANDIDATE NAME

2. If you have a second choice candidate, completely fill in the oval next to that candidate under Second Choice.



Wrong:
Wrong: Voter chose the same candidate more than once.

3. Your third choice candidate, if you have one, works the same way.



Wrong:
Wrong: Voter chose more than one candidate in the same column.

! All three choices (if you choose to have three) must be different from each other.

! If you make a mistake - or cross out or make a stray mark - ask for a new ballot. Otherwise your vote may not count.

Begin voting below

CITY OFFICES

MAYOR Mark your first, second and third choice candidates in the columns below. One to be elected.

1 First Choice	2 Second Choice	3 Third Choice
Fill in one oval completely.	Make your second choice here.	Make your third choice here.
<input type="radio"/> PAPA JOHN KOLSTAD Independent Civic Leader	<input type="radio"/> PAPA JOHN KOLSTAD Independent Civic Leader	<input type="radio"/> PAPA JOHN KOLSTAD Independent Civic Leader
<input type="radio"/> JOHN CHARLES WILSON Edgemoor National Party	<input type="radio"/> JOHN CHARLES WILSON Edgemoor National Party	<input type="radio"/> JOHN CHARLES WILSON Edgemoor National Party
<input type="radio"/> JOEY LOMBARD Is Awesome	<input type="radio"/> JOEY LOMBARD Is Awesome	<input type="radio"/> JOEY LOMBARD Is Awesome
<input type="radio"/> BOB CARNEY JR. Moderate Progressive Censored.	<input type="radio"/> BOB CARNEY JR. Moderate Progressive Censored	<input type="radio"/> BOB CARNEY JR. Moderate Progressive Censored
<input type="radio"/> BILL MCGAUGHEY New Dignity Party	<input type="radio"/> BILL MCGAUGHEY New Dignity Party	<input type="radio"/> BILL MCGAUGHEY New Dignity Party
<input type="radio"/> TOM FISKE Socialist Workers Party	<input type="radio"/> TOM FISKE Socialist Workers Party	<input type="radio"/> TOM FISKE Socialist Workers Party
<input type="radio"/> R.T. RYBAK Democratic-Farmer-Labor	<input type="radio"/> R.T. RYBAK Democratic-Farmer-Labor	<input type="radio"/> R.T. RYBAK Democratic-Farmer-Labor
<input type="radio"/> JAMES R. EVERETT Social Entrepreneurship	<input type="radio"/> JAMES R. EVERETT Social Entrepreneurship	<input type="radio"/> JAMES R. EVERETT Social Entrepreneurship
<input type="radio"/> AL FLOWERS Democratic-Farmer-Labor	<input type="radio"/> AL FLOWERS Democratic-Farmer-Labor	<input type="radio"/> AL FLOWERS Democratic-Farmer-Labor
<input type="radio"/> DICK FRANSON Democratic-Farmer-Labor	<input type="radio"/> DICK FRANSON Democratic-Farmer-Labor	<input type="radio"/> DICK FRANSON Democratic-Farmer-Labor
<input type="radio"/> CHRISTOPHER CLARK Libertarian	<input type="radio"/> CHRISTOPHER CLARK Libertarian	<input type="radio"/> CHRISTOPHER CLARK Libertarian
<input type="text"/> write-in, if any	<input type="text"/> write-in, if any	<input type="text"/> write-in, if any

COUNCIL MEMBER WARD SEVEN Mark your first, second and third choice candidates in the columns below. One to be elected.

1 First Choice	2 Second Choice	3 Third Choice
Fill in one oval completely.	Make your second choice here.	Make your third choice here.
<input type="radio"/> MICHAEL J. KATCH Independent	<input type="radio"/> MICHAEL J. KATCH Independent	<input type="radio"/> MICHAEL J. KATCH Independent
<input type="radio"/> JEFFREY ALAN WAGNER Independent	<input type="radio"/> JEFFREY ALAN WAGNER Independent	<input type="radio"/> JEFFREY ALAN WAGNER Independent
<input type="radio"/> LISA GOODMAN Democratic-Farmer-Labor	<input type="radio"/> LISA GOODMAN Democratic-Farmer-Labor	<input type="radio"/> LISA GOODMAN Democratic-Farmer-Labor
<input type="text"/> write-in, if any	<input type="text"/> write-in, if any	<input type="text"/> write-in, if any

Continue voting next side →

Ranked Choice Voting

Instructions

How to make your candidate choice

1. Pick your first choice candidate and completely fill in the oval next to that candidate under First Choice, like this:

• CANDIDATE NAME

2. If you have a second choice candidate, completely fill in the oval next to that candidate under Second Choice.

3. Your third choice candidate, if you have one, works the same way.

! All three choices (if you choose to have three) must be different from each other.

! If you make a mistake - or cross out or make a stray mark - ask for a new ballot. Otherwise your vote may not count.

Begin voting below

CITY OFFICES

MAYOR Mark your first, second and third choice candidates

1 First Choice Fill in one oval completely. **2 Second Choice** Make your second choice here.

<input type="radio"/> PAPA JOHN KOLSTAD Independent Civic Leader	<input type="radio"/> PAPA JOHN KOLSTAD Independent Civic Leader
<input type="radio"/> JOHN CHARLES WILSON Edgemoor National Party	<input type="radio"/> JOHN CHARLES WILSON Edgemoor National Party
<input type="radio"/> JOEY LOMBARD No Assesions	<input type="radio"/> JOEY LOMBARD No Assesions
<input type="radio"/> BOB CARNEY JR. Minnesota Progressive Citizens	<input type="radio"/> BOB CARNEY JR. Minnesota Progressive Citizens
<input type="radio"/> BILL MCGAUGHEY New Option Party	<input type="radio"/> BILL MCGAUGHEY New Option Party
<input type="radio"/> TOM FISKE Socialist Workers Party	<input type="radio"/> TOM FISKE Socialist Workers Party
<input type="radio"/> R.T. RYBAK Democratic-Farmer-Labor	<input type="radio"/> R.T. RYBAK Democratic-Farmer-Labor
<input type="radio"/> JAMES R. EVERETT Social Entrepreneurship	<input type="radio"/> JAMES R. EVERETT Social Entrepreneurship
<input type="radio"/> AL FLOWERS Democratic-Farmer-Labor	<input type="radio"/> AL FLOWERS Democratic-Farmer-Labor
<input type="radio"/> DICK FRANSON Democratic-Farmer-Labor	<input type="radio"/> DICK FRANSON Democratic-Farmer-Labor
<input type="radio"/> CHRISTOPHER CLARK Libertarian	<input type="radio"/> CHRISTOPHER CLARK Libertarian
<input type="radio"/> write-in, if any	<input type="radio"/> write-in, if any

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1 First Choice	2 Second Choice	3 Third Choice
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<input type="radio"/> JEFFREY ALAN WAGNER Independent	<input type="radio"/> JEFFREY ALAN WAGNER Independent	<input type="radio"/> JEFFREY ALAN WAGNER Independent
<input type="radio"/> LISA GOODMAN Democratic-Farmer-Labor	<input type="radio"/> LISA GOODMAN Democratic-Farmer-Labor	<input type="radio"/> LISA GOODMAN Democratic-Farmer-Labor
<input type="radio"/> write-in, if any	<input type="radio"/> write-in, if any	<input type="radio"/> write-in, if any

COUNCIL MEMBER WARD SEVEN

Mark your first, second and third choice candidates in the columns below. One to be elected.

1 First Choice	2 Second Choice	3 Third Choice
<input type="radio"/> MICHAEL J. KATCH Independent	<input type="radio"/> MICHAEL J. KATCH Independent	<input checked="" type="radio"/> MICHAEL J. KATCH Independent
<input checked="" type="radio"/> JEFFREY ALAN WAGNER Independent	<input type="radio"/> JEFFREY ALAN WAGNER Independent	<input type="radio"/> JEFFREY ALAN WAGNER Independent
<input type="radio"/> LISA GOODMAN Democratic-Farmer-Labor	<input checked="" type="radio"/> LISA GOODMAN Democratic-Farmer-Labor	<input type="radio"/> LISA GOODMAN Democratic-Farmer-Labor
<input type="radio"/> write-in, if any	<input type="radio"/> write-in, if any	<input type="radio"/> write-in, if any

Continue voting next side

