



## **Essex County Board of Elections**

### **2025 Annual Report**

**Presented to the  
Essex County Board of Supervisors**

By

Roy Holzer  
Republican Commissioner

Mary McGowan  
Democratic Commissioner



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## **2025 Annual Report**

### **Statutory Authority and Responsibilities of the Essex County Board of Elections**

The Essex County Board of Elections (ECBOE) is a local board of elections organized pursuant to the laws of New York State. Under Section 3-200 of New York State Election Law, ECBOE has overall responsibility for administering the election process in local election districts throughout Essex County. ECBOE's responsibilities include:

- Registering voters
- Maintaining voter registration records
- Conducting primary, general and special elections as well as early voting for each election
- Providing support to villages, school districts and others as needed
- Canvassing and certifying election results
- Creating ballots
- Mailing and processing absentee and affidavit ballots
- Maintaining election machines
- Receiving designating and nominating petitions and other ballot access forms
- Ruling on objections to filed documents
- Assisting with nominating caucuses
- Implementing statutory election reforms such as the federal Help America Vote Act and the New York State Election Reform and Modernization Act

This year continued to be one of major change for local boards of elections around New York State. The New York State Legislature enacted numerous laws which impacted Election Law and the operation of elections at the state and local level. This period of change is expected to continue into 2026.

### **2025 Elections**

Local Elections in 2025 included a June Primary and a November General Election with an election for two Supreme Court Justices and a Special Election to fill the 115<sup>th</sup> District Assembly Seat.

The political calendar is published by the New York State Board of Elections and is the guiding document for the electoral process in New York. The calendar establishes deadlines for voter registration, petitioning and caucus processes, early voting, primaries and general elections.

New York State instituted nine-day early voting periods prior to the 2019 General Election. In 2021, the New York State Legislature approved and the Governor signed a new law that required each Board of Elections to identify at least one early voting site located in the largest population municipality in the county. For Essex County, the largest population municipality is the Town of North Elba (Lake Placid) which is located in the most western part of the county.

Because most of Essex County’s eighteen towns are located a substantial distance from North Elba, ECBOE opted to include a second early voting site at a more centralized location. Early voting in Essex County occurred at the Lake Placid Beach House in Lake Placid and at the Essex County Public Safety Building in Lewis. Early voting was available to all registered voters for nine days prior to the election.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Election</b>	<b>Election Day Machines</b>	<b>Early Voting Machines</b>	<b>Affidavit Ballots</b>	<b>Absentee/EMB Ballots</b>	<b>Total Voters Participating</b>
06/24/25	Local Primary	557	9	1	54	621
11/4/25	General	9353	1421	79	742	11595

New York State Election Law established two petition periods for 2025. Designating petitions began circulating on February 25 with a filing window of March 31 – April 3.

Independent petitions may be filed by candidates who do not seek a major party designation or by those seeking a second line on the ballot. Independent petitions began circulating on April 15 with a filing window of May 20-27.

While the designating and independent petitions are generally the vehicle for giving candidates access to the ballot in Essex County, New York State Election Law Section 6-108 allows for the use of a caucus to select candidates for local elections. In Essex County, a caucus is used by the Democratic committees in the Towns of Chesterfield and North Elba.

191 Petitions were received and reviewed by ECBOE in 2025.

**Special Elections.**

The Essex County Board of Elections has historically provided assistance to villages, school boards and fire districts for their elections as requested. This assistance has included providing up to date voter lists, developing the ballot, providing technician support and use of an electronic voting machines.

**2026 Election Dates.** The June State & Local Primary will be held on June 23 with the General Election scheduled for November 3, 2026 according to the political calendar approved by the New York State Legislature and published by the New York State Board of Elections. A link to the political calendar is located at the end of this report.

## **ECBOE Staffing**

The Essex County Board of Elections is staffed with equal numbers of Democratic and Republican staff members. Two part-time commissioners lead the board. Each commissioner is appointed by their political party and confirmed by the County Board of Supervisors under Section 3-204 of New York State Election Law.

In 2024 a resolution was passed by the Board of Supervisors that lengthened the term of Election Commissioner from two years to four years. This same policy was adopted by our neighboring counties over the past three decades. Democratic Commissioner Mary McGowan was appointed for the 2025 - 2028 term. Republican Commissioner Jack Moulton served until March 3, 2025 at which time Republican Commissioner Roy Holzer was appointed to serve until 2028.

Each Commissioner has two full-time staff members. The Deputy Commissioner is authorized to represent the Commissioner and act on matters before the Board of Elections in his/her absence. The Deputy Commissioner also provides the majority of the day-to-day administrative support to the Board of Elections. They are responsible for managing the voter registration and information systems. The Deputy Commissioners for 2025 included Republican Krista Moran and Democrat Jennifer Fifield.

The Election Specialists are responsible for the management and maintenance of the voting machines, software and other equipment. They design ballots, schedule the delivery and pick-up of machines and equipment from the polling sites, and test machines at regular intervals throughout the year. The Election Specialists for 2025 include Republican Shannon Doyle and Democrat Andrea Baer.

## **ECBOE Budget**

The Essex County Board of Elections is funded primarily through an allocation from the Essex County Board of Supervisors as part of the County's annual budget. The total approved budget for 2025 was \$ 771,365. The fiscal year for ECBOE is January through December.

## **The Voters of Essex County**

As of the date of this report, the total number of voters registered in Essex County was 27,994. Those enrolled in a political party included: 7,539 Democrats, 10,627 Republicans, 303 Conservatives, 113 Working Families Party Members, 1,352 "Other" Party Members and 6,013 not affiliated with any party.

Voters may register to vote at the Board of Elections office, at the Department of Motor Vehicles or other State Agency, or by completing a voter registration form available at local

town halls, schools, post offices or online. In 2025, there were 1,070 new voter registrations in Essex County.

<b>Party Enrollment Choice</b>	<b>Number of New Voters</b>
Republican	327
Democratic	303
Conservative	9
Working Families	8
Unaffiliated (Blank)	395
Other*	28
<b>Total New Voters</b>	<b>1,070</b>

*\*Other includes voters who selected their own party identification.*

Voters have the option to change their party enrollment. Section 5-304 of Election Law requires that a voter’s change in enrollment take effect immediately if filed with the Board of Elections by February 14. Enrollment changes after February 14 and before seven days prior to or seven days after the June primary will take effect on the seventh day after the June primary.

### **Election Districts and Polling Places**

Essex County includes 18 Towns. Twenty polling sites serve the 33 election districts. Ten towns have a single election district. Five towns are served by two election districts. Moriah has three election districts. Ticonderoga has four election districts. North Elba has six election districts.

ECBOE contracts with each polling site for the use of their space for Primary, Special and General Elections. Contracts are renewed annually. Each polling site must be accessible under the Americans with Disabilities Act and pass a strict 50+ point inspection.

### **Election Staffing**

New York State Election Law authorizes Essex County Board of Elections to appoint staffing for elections conducted in the County. Section 3-300 give the Board of Elections the ability to appoint clerks, voting machine technicians and custodians, and other employees, fix their salaries within the amounts appropriated. Section 3-3-4 allows for the appointment of election inspectors and poll clerks.

Election workers must include equal numbers of the two major parties (Republican and Democrat). The Board of Elections trains the election staff and pays them. They are also paid to attend training prior to the elections. Inspectors that are not affiliated with a major party may still serve as inspectors but are assigned a major party to represent on Election Day.

In 2025, 134 inspectors were recruited and trained by the Essex County Board of Elections. A three-hour inspector training was offered on ten occasions for workers for the 2025 elections. Inspector ages range from 44-90, with an average age of 67. 80% of inspectors are over the age of 60.

Over the last several years, recruiting, training and maintaining election workers has grown more and more difficult. Many of the long-time election workers are working shorter shifts, retiring or unable to work due to issues of health or other personal circumstance to continue with the Board of Elections.

New York State Election Law Section 3-400 authorizes the use of split shifts for election workers. Some of our inspectors have elected to split shifts with their fellow workers, increasing the overall shortage of inspectors. Section 3-400 also authorizes the use of individuals who are seventeen years of age to serve as election inspectors or poll clerks if they are authorized by their school to participate and will be granted school credit for participating. ECBOE has not had success in recruiting these younger inspectors but will continue to try to do so.

### **Voting Machines and Other Election Infrastructure and Equipment**

The Essex County Board of Elections maintains 33 Dominion voting machines and 4 print-on-demand machines. The voting machines were purchased in 2023 a mix of one-time county funds and grant funds. The machines were first deployed in the November General Election that year and were a huge success. We have seen a reduction of about 75% in Poll Worker Open/Close related calls and our technicians found them much easier to work with. In 2025, the machines were tested regularly as required by the New York State Board of Elections. All machines deployed for elections are tested prior to each election.

### **Security and Emergency Preparedness**

The Essex County Board of Elections is committed to protecting the right of county residents to register to vote and to vote. The operating rules of the Essex County Board of Elections are based on those recommended by the New York State Board of Elections. Among some of the basic steps that the Board of Elections takes to protect the right of voters to vote include:

- When voters register or change their enrollment, the registration form is scanned, data entered by a staff member of one party and double verified by a staff member in the other party.
- Voting machines and ballots are stored in a facility outside the Board of Elections office which has a double combination lock – each party has half the combination code. It cannot be opened without a member of each party present. There is also to be no internet access in this facility.
- Absentee ballots, petitions, and voter registration cards are stored in a storage area with a double lock. Each party has a key. The door cannot be opened without a member of the other party present.

Having a good emergency plan in place is critical to ensuring the ability of voters to vote during emergency situations. Essex County Board of Election's Operational Contingency Plan was revised in 2025.

The ECBOE's website and information technology system is managed by the Essex County IT Department. ECBOE's voter registration system was built and is actively managed by Luisa Towne in the Essex County IT Department. Over the lifetime of this software, we estimate Luisa has saved the county over one million dollars by keeping this in-house. ECBOE provides content and data entry. The County is constantly updating its technology and security procedures. In addition, the State Board of Election provides guidance to local Boards of Election concerning procedural and cyber security issues. Both the County and the State Board of Elections made training on cyber security topics available to the Essex County Board of Elections and County BOE staff participated in those opportunities.

The NYS Board of Elections provided ECBOE with technical assistance to create a Risk Remediation Plan to accompany a Cyber Security Grant that will allow ECBOE to work with a consultant and the County's IT Department to strengthen the Board's cyber security policies and infrastructure. Implementation of that plan was completed in 2025 with continual updates throughout the year.

**For More Information.**

Essex County Board of Elections: <https://essexcountyny.gov/board-of-elections/>

New York State Board of Elections: <https://www.elections.ny.gov/>

NYS 2025 Political Calendar: <https://elections.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2024/12/2025-political-calendar-quad-fold-final-12.5.2024.pdf>