

12th Congressional District Special Congressional Election Questions and Answers

Q. Does a special congressional election have to be held to fill the vacancy in the 12th Congressional District?

A. Yes. Pursuant to Ohio law, the vacancy must be filled by a special congressional election, and candidates for that election must be nominated in a special congressional primary.¹

Q. If only one candidate files for a political party's primary nomination or no candidate files for a political party's nomination, does the board need to conduct a special congressional primary election for that political party?

A. No. Like a primary election in an odd-numbered year, "a primary election preceding a special election to fill a vacancy in an office shall be eliminated if no valid declaration of candidacy is filed for such office, or if the number of persons filing such declarations of candidacy as candidates of one political party does not exceed the number of candidates which such political party is entitled to nominate for election to such office."²

Q. In order to save money, can the special congressional general election be conducted by mail?

A. No. Ohio law does not permit this.

Q. In order to save time and effort, can a board of elections provide an optical scan ballot to each voter on Election Day and centrally count the ballots at the board of elections' office?

A. No. A board of elections that uses optical scan ballots and automatic tabulating equipment as the primary voting system is not permitted to tabulate optical scan ballots at a central location.³

Q. When do absent voter ballots need to be available for distribution for the special congressional primary and general elections?

A. Absentee voting for UOCAVA voters begins the 45th day prior to the special congressional primary and general election, and regular absentee voting begins the day after the close of voter registration for each election.

¹ R.C. 3521.03; 3513.32.

² R.C. 3513.32.

³ R.C. 3506.21(D).

Q. Will the state pay the costs associated with holding the special congressional election?

A. Yes. The state is required to pay the costs associated with conducting the special congressional election.⁴ The Secretary of State's office will provide additional details on reimbursement to the affected boards of elections at a later date.

Q. May a board of elections “combine” precincts for the special congressional election?

A. A board of election is permitted to combine precincts within its jurisdiction. However, a board should note the following:

- No change in precinct boundaries shall be made during the 25 days immediately preceding a primary or general election or between the January 1 and May 8, 2018 (members of county party central committees are to be elected at the May 8, 2018 primary election).⁵
- A precinct cannot contain more than 1,400 electors.⁶

Q. Is a 17-year old elector who will be 18 years old on or before August 7, 2018 eligible to vote in the special congressional primary election?

A. Yes. A 17-year old elector who will be 18 years old on or before August 7, 2018 may vote in the special congressional primary election being held on May 8, 2018.⁷

⁴ R.C. 3521.03.

⁵ R.C. 3501.18(A).

⁶ R.C. 3501.18(A).

⁷ R.C. 3503.01; 3503.011; 3503.07.