



# RANKED CHOICE VOTING IN UTAH CITIES

**In 2018**, the Utah state legislature passed HB 35 that established a pilot in which cities can use ranked choice voting (RCV). It **passed 22-0 in the senate, 67-3 in House; 11-1 in interim committee; and 7-0 in Senate Gov't Operations**. Gov. Herbert signed it into law in March 2018.

**In 2019**, Payson City and Vineyard City used ranked choice voting in city elections. In a post election survey administered by the Utah County Clerk, **86% of respondents found RCV easy to use and 82.5% want RCV used in future elections. 71.2% of Payson voters ranked all five candidates on the ballot and 58.6% of Vineyard voters ranked all seven candidates on the ballot. 87.5% of candidates had a positive impression of RCV with no candidates having a negative impression. 75% of candidates think their city should continue using RCV with no candidates opposing it.**

**In 2020**, the Utah Republican Party and Utah Democratic Party used RCV in their state convention and some county conventions. The Utah Republican Party surveyed delegates and over **1,100 of about 3,700 delegates responded. 72% not only liked ranked choice voting, but want to use it again to nominate candidates.**

## WHAT IS RANKED CHOICE VOTING?

**Ranked choice voting** (also known as *instant runoff voting*) has voters rank their choices, first, second, third and so on. If someone wins over 50% during the first round, that's your winner. But if no one crosses that threshold, the last place finisher is eliminated, and that candidate's supporters are reallocated to their next backup choice. That process is repeated until someone wins over 50% of the votes. **RCV will be used in more than 20 U.S. cities and counties in their next election.** RCV is also used statewide in Maine and by major party and government leaders in Canada, United Kingdom, and Australia. Arkansas, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and South Carolina use RCV ballots for military and overseas voters to permit them to participate in second-round runoff.

## RANKED CHOICE VOTING & MAJORITY RULE

**In 2020**, Utah is having an important conversation about having elections by majority. With new paths to the primary ballot, four candidates faced off for Governor (*winner 35%*), Congressional District 1 (*winner 31%*) and Congressional District 4 (*winner 43.5%*). RCV can have Party nominees emerge as a primary majority winner.

## MERITS OF RANKED CHOICE VOTING

### Rcv Encourages Civility.

Candidates conduct more civil campaigns by addressing the issues and working to appeal to a broader spectrum of voters when they actively seeking second and third choice support from backers of other candidates.

### More Robust Debate Of Issues.

To win a ranked choice voting election, a candidate reaches out to all voters in order to see first, second and third choice support. Candidates talk about issues; not only their issues, but their opponent's issues as well.

### More Engaged Voters.

Voters become more informed about the candidates and issues since they have reasons to consider candidates beyond their 1st choice.

### Voters More Fully Express Their Will.

Ranking their choices, voters can freely vote for the candidate who they most support, even if that candidate isn't favored to win. There are no wasted votes.

### Fiscal Savings For Cities.

Taxpayers' dollars are saved by allowing the city to hold one election in November rather than two elections.

### Shorter, less expensive city campaigns.

Candidates can focus on a single election in November, rather than an August primary followed by November election.

### Ready for cities to implement.

ES&S, the voting equipment awarded a State of Utah contract for state funding is capable of running ranked choice voting elections.

### Eliminates vote splitting.

Longshot candidates do not win when more than one mainstream candidate split the majority of the vote.

### Eliminates the spoiler effect.

Longshot candidates do not draw votes away from a candidate who is preferred by most voters.

### A winner by majority vote.

The final tally is always between the top two vote getting candidates and the winner gets more than 50% of the vote.

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