

## MICHIGAN ELECTION LAW (EXCERPT)

### Act 116 of 1954

#### CHAPTER XXXI

#### THE STATE CANVASS

##### **168.841 Board of state canvassers; duties.**

Sec. 841. (1) The board of state canvassers shall canvass the returns and determine the result of all elections for electors of president and vice president of the United States, state officers, United States senators, representatives in congress, circuit judges, state senators and representatives elected by a district that is located in more than 1 county, and other officers as required by law. The board of state canvassers shall also determine the result of an election on a proposed amendment to the constitution or on any other ballot question that has been submitted, pursuant to law, to the qualified and registered electors of this state at large for ratification or rejection. The board of state canvassers shall canvass the returns and determine the result of an election on a ballot question submitted to the qualified and registered electors of more than 1 county under the regional transit authority act, 2012 PA 387, MCL 124.541 to 124.558. Upon making the determination, the board of state canvassers shall immediately prepare a certificate of determination and deliver the properly certified certificate of determination to the secretary of state.

(2) Upon receipt of a properly certified certificate of determination from a board of county canvassers pursuant to section 826, the board of state canvassers, at its next meeting, shall record the results of the county canvass contained in the certificate.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955;—Am. 1995, Act 261, Eff. Mar. 28, 1996;—Am. 2015, Act 197, Imd. Eff. Nov. 24, 2015.

**Popular name:** Election Code

##### **168.842 Board of state canvassers; meeting; time and place, notice, adjournment; expedited canvass of returns.**

Sec. 842. (1) Except as otherwise provided under subsection (2), the board of state canvassers, for the purpose of canvassing the returns and ascertaining and determining the result of an election, shall meet on or before the twentieth day after the election. The secretary of the board of state canvassers shall appoint the day of the meeting, which must be as soon as practicable after the receipt of the returns from the boards of county canvassers, and shall notify the other members of the board. Except as otherwise provided under subsections (2) and (3), the board shall complete the canvass and announce the board's determination not later than the twentieth day after the election. The board may at the time of its meeting canvass the returns for any office for which the returns have been received.

(2) If the unofficial election returns show that the election of electors of President and Vice President of the United States is determined by a vote differential between the first place and second place candidates for President and Vice President of the United States of less than 25,000 votes, the secretary of state shall direct the boards of county canvassers to canvass returns on an expedited schedule. The secretary of state may direct the boards of county canvassers to complete the canvass and certify the statements as required by law not later than the tenth day after the election.

(3) The secretary of the board of state canvassers may appoint the day for the board of state canvassers to conduct the expedited canvass of the returns as required under subsection (2) and determine the results of that election. The day appointed for the expedited canvass must be as soon as practicable after receipt of the returns from the boards of county canvassers, but the board of state canvassers shall complete the canvass and announce the board's determination no later than the thirteenth day after the election.

(4) If any statewide primary election has an unofficial vote differential of 1,500 votes or less, the secretary of state shall direct the board of state canvassers to canvass the returns of that statewide primary election on an expedited schedule and shall appoint the day for the board of state canvassers to conduct the expedited canvass.

(5) It is the ministerial, clerical, and nondiscretionary duty of the board of state canvassers, and each of the members of the board of state canvassers, to certify election results based solely on the certified statements of votes from counties.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955;—Am. 2004, Act 92, Imd. Eff. Apr. 26, 2004;—Am. 2018, Act 382, Eff. Mar. 19, 2019;—Am. 2023, Act 269, Eff. Feb. 13, 2024;—Am. 2024, Act 74, Eff. Apr. 2, 2025.

**Compiler's note:** Act 269 of 2001, which was approved by the Governor and filed with the Secretary of State on January 11, 2002, provided for the amendment of MCL 168.31, 168.73, 168.283, 168.393, 168.509y, 168.509aa, 168.561a, 168.624, 168.624a, 168.686, 168.706, 168.727, 168.737, 168.745, 168.769, 168.782b, 168.795, 168.795c, 168.797a, 168.798c, 168.799a, 168.803, 168.804, 168.842, and 168.931 of, the addition of Sec. 701 to, and the repeal of Sec. 509 of, Act 116 of 1954, known as the Michigan Election Law. A petition seeking a referendum on Act 269 of 2001 was filed with the Secretary of State. The Board of State Canvassers officially declared Rendered Monday, July 7, 2025

the sufficiency of the referendum petition on May 14, 2002. Const 1963, art 2, sec 9, provides that no law as to which the power of referendum properly has been invoked shall be effective thereafter unless approved by a majority of the electors voting thereon at the next general election. A referendum on Act 269 of 2001 was presented to the electors at the November 5, 2002, general election as Proposal 02-1, which read as follows:

**“A REFERENDUM ON PUBLIC ACT 269 OF 2001--AN ACT TO AMEND CERTAIN SECTIONS OF MICHIGAN ELECTION LAW**

Public Act 269 of 2001 would:

- Eliminate “straight party” vote option on partisan general election ballots.
- Require Secretary of State to obtain training reports from local election officials.
- Require registered voters who do not appear on registration list to show picture identification before voting a challenged ballot.
- Require expedited canvass if presidential vote differential is under 25,000.
- Require ballot counting equipment to screen ballots for voting errors to ensure the accurate tabulation of absentee ballots. Permit voters in polls to correct errors.
- Provide penalties for stealing campaign signs or accepting payment for campaign work while being paid as a public employee to perform election duties.

Should this law be approved?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
No \_\_\_\_\_”

Act 269 of 2001 was not approved by a majority of the electors voting thereon at the November 5, 2002, general election.

**Popular name:** Election Code

**168.843 Statements of votes; filing and preservation by secretary of state; certified copies.**

Sec. 843. The secretary of state, on the receipt of the certified copies of the statements of votes given in the several counties directed by law to be sent to him by the county clerks, shall place on file and preserve such certified copies in his office. If from any county clerk such certified copies shall not have been received by the secretary of state on or before the fifteenth day after any election, the secretary of state shall communicate with such county clerk by telephone, telegraph or mail, requesting that such certified copies be immediately forwarded and such county clerk shall forthwith forward such certified copies to the secretary of state. When the board of state canvassers meets to canvass the returns and determine the result of any election, the secretary of state shall lay before the board the statements received by him of the votes given at such election in the several counties.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955.

**Popular name:** Election Code

**168.844 Statements of votes; examination, preparation of statement of totals by board of state canvassers.**

Sec. 844. The board of state canvassers shall examine the statements received by the secretary of state of the votes cast in the several counties and prepare a statement showing the total number of votes cast for all candidates for each office, the names of the persons for whom such votes were cast, the number of votes cast for each of such persons, the total number of votes cast on each constitutional amendment and proposition which may have been submitted, and the number of votes cast for and the number of votes cast against each such constitutional amendment and proposition.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955.

**Popular name:** Election Code

**168.845 Certifying correctness of statement; certificate of determination; certificate of election; declaration of vacancy; publication of constitutional amendment.**

Sec. 845. The members of the board of state canvassers shall certify as to the correctness of the statement provided for in section 844 and subscribe their names to the statement. The members of the board of state canvassers shall determine which persons have been duly elected to each office and which constitutional amendments and propositions, if any, have been approved or rejected. The board shall certify the determinations and deliver the statement and certificate of determinations to the secretary of state. The secretary of state shall file and preserve the statement and certificate of determinations in his or her office and shall immediately execute and deliver a certificate of election to each person elected. If the secretary of state receives notice before the certificate of determinations is issued that the person to whom the certificate of election is to be issued died, withdrew from the district, was declared legally incapacitated by a court having jurisdiction, or submitted to the secretary of state an affidavit declaring that person's intention to refuse the certificate of election, then the secretary of state shall not issue a certificate of election and the office shall be declared vacant as of the commencement of the term of office to which that person would otherwise have been elected. The secretary of state shall also publish any amendment to the constitution that is approved and ratified with the laws enacted by the legislature at its next succeeding session.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955;—Am. 1956, Act 37, Imd. Eff. Mar. 28, 1956;—Am. 1976, Act 162, Imd. Eff. June 21, 1976;—Am. 1999, Act 217, Eff. Mar. 10, 2000;—Am. 2003, Act 119, Imd. Eff. July 29, 2003.

**Popular name:** Election Code

#### **168.845a Procedure for contesting presidential election for erroneous certification or determination on the results.**

Sec. 845a. (1) A candidate listed on the ballot for the office of President or Vice President of the United States who is aggrieved by an error in the certification or determination of the results of a presidential election by the board of state canvassers may seek judicial review of the certification or determination by a complaint for mandamus filed in the supreme court as provided in this section. A candidate is aggrieved for purposes of this subsection only if, but for the error, the candidate would have received the largest number of votes eligible to be counted in the presidential election.

(2) The supreme court has original and exclusive jurisdiction to consider a complaint for mandamus under subsection (1). A complaint for mandamus under subsection (1) must be filed with the supreme court within 48 hours after the certification or determination of the results of a presidential election and must name the board of state canvassers as a defendant. The governor, the attorney general, the secretary of state, and the candidate certified or determined by the board of state canvassers to be the winner of the presidential election may intervene in a proceeding described under subsection (1). To have conclusive effect on the determination of electors appointed by this state, the supreme court's final order in a proceeding described under subsection (1) must be issued not later than the day before the date that the electors for President and Vice President of the United States convene under section 47.

(3) A proceeding described under subsection (1) must not delay any of the following:

(a) The board of state canvassers certifying or determining the results of a presidential election as required under this act.

(b) The governor issuing or transmitting a certificate of ascertainment under section 46.

(c) A recount as provided under chapter XXXIII.

(4) A party in a proceeding described under subsection (1) shall not seek preliminary relief.

(5) A proceeding described under subsection (1) is not an election audit under this act.

(6) A proceeding described under subsection (1) is the exclusive means of seeking judicial relief from the certification or determination of the results of a presidential election.

(7) As used in this section, "presidential election" means the statewide general November election in 2024, and the statewide general November election every 4 years after 2024, that is determined solely by the vote of electors casting ballots in the election for a candidate for President and Vice President of the United States, including the election of electors of President and Vice President of the United States as provided under chapter IV.

**History:** Add. 2023, Act 255, Eff. Feb. 13, 2024.

**Popular name:** Election Code

#### **168.846 Board of state canvassers; tie vote, determination and certification under MCL 168.852.**

Sec. 846. If 2 or more individuals have an equal and the highest number of votes for any office, as canvassed by the board of state canvassers, the tie must be resolved and the winner certified as provided under section 852.

**History:** 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955;—Am. 2023, Act 269, Eff. Feb. 13, 2024.

**Popular name:** Election Code

#### **168.847 Release of ballots, ballot boxes, voting machines, and equipment.**

Sec. 847. The secretary of state may authorize the release of all ballots, ballot boxes, voting machines, and equipment after 30 days following certification of an election by the board of state canvassers in a precinct other than a precinct in which 1 or more of the following occur:

(a) A petition for recount has been filed with the board of state canvassers.

(b) A petition has been filed pursuant to section 879.

(c) A court of competent jurisdiction has issued an order restraining interference with ballots, ballot boxes, voting machines, and equipment.

**History:** Add. 1973, Act 157, Imd. Eff. Dec. 6, 1973;—Am. 1978, Act 7, Imd. Eff. Feb. 7, 1978;—Am. 1995, Act 261, Eff. Mar. 28, 1996;—Am. 2012, Act 271, Eff. Aug. 15, 2012.

**Popular name:** Election Code

**168.847a Financial disclosure report; candidate for office.**

Sec. 847a. A candidate for office, as that term is defined in section 3 of the candidate for office financial disclosure act, must file the financial disclosure report required under section 5 of the candidate for office financial disclosure act with the department of state before that candidate for office assumes office.

**History:** Add. 2023, Act 267, Eff. Feb. 13, 2024.

**Popular name:** Election Code

**168.848 Postelection statement; violation as misdemeanor; false statement as perjury.**

Sec. 848. (1) Each elected candidate subject to the Michigan campaign finance act, 1976 PA 388, MCL 169.201 to 169.282, and whose candidate committee received or expended more than \$1,000.00 during the election cycle shall file a postelection statement with the filing official designated to receive the elected candidate's candidate committee campaign statements under section 36 of the Michigan campaign finance act, 1976 PA 388, MCL 169.236. All of the following apply to a postelection statement required by this section:

(a) The postelection statement must be on a form prescribed by the secretary of state.

(b) The elected candidate shall file the postelection statement before the elected candidate assumes office.

(c) The postelection statement shall include an attestation signed by the elected candidate that, as of the date of the postelection statement, all statements, reports, late filing fees, and fines required of the candidate or a candidate committee organized to support the candidate's election under the Michigan campaign finance act, 1976 PA 388, MCL 169.201 to 169.282, have been filed or paid.

(d) The postelection statement shall include an attestation signed by the elected candidate acknowledging that making a false statement in a postelection statement is punishable by a fine of not more than \$1,000.00 or imprisonment for not more than 5 years, or both.

(2) Failure to file a postelection statement as required by subsection (1) is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not more than \$500.00 or imprisonment for not more than 93 days, or both.

(3) Making a false statement in a postelection statement required under subsection (1) is perjury, punishable as provided in section 936.

**History:** Add. 2003, Act 119, Imd. Eff. July 29, 2003.

**Popular name:** Election Code