

WHAT IS RANKED CHOICE VOTING?

Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) **allows voters to rank more than one candidate in order of preference on the ballot (1st Choice, 2nd Choice, etc.) and eliminates the need to conduct separate runoff elections.** If a candidate receives more than half of the first choices, that candidate wins just like in any other election.

If there is no majority winner after counting first choices, the race is decided by “instant runoff.” The candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated and voters who picked that losing candidate as “number 1” have their votes count for their next choice.

The process of eliminating losing candidates continues until two candidates remain, and **the majority candidate wins.**

BENEFITS OF RCV

- **Empowers voters to choose the candidates they like the best.** With more choice, voters have a stronger voice in the outcome of elections and greater confidence their vote will make a difference.
- **Increases competition.** RCV eliminates strategic voting, vote “splintering,” “wasted” votes and the “spoiler” effect. In RCV, no vote is ever “wasted,” no candidate is ever a “spoiler” and voters are free to express their true preferences instead of voting strategically — out of fear that a vote for the candidate they prefer will help the candidate they like the least.
- **Rewards positive campaigning.** Candidates do best when they appeal to a broader range of voters. Negative attacks alienate voters and may cost candidates crucial 2nd and 3rd choice support the candidate needs to win.
- **Produces consensus.** RCV prevents candidates from winning by only appealing to a small base. An RCV candidate must work to earn the support of a broader range of voters.
- **Improves voter engagement and satisfaction.** With more viable choices on the ballot, voters participate more fully in our electoral process and have more voice. Voters who have used RCV prefer it.

COMMON QUESTIONS

WILL VOTERS FIND RCV CONFUSING?

- Voters who have used RCV find it easy and intuitive: “As easy as 1,2,3.”
- RCV voters prefer it; 9 in 10 use the power to rank.
- Rates of ballot error are low; no greater than in any other form of voting.

DOES RCV IGNORE BALLOTS AND CREATE FAKE MAJORITIES?

- RCV majorities are just as real as in any runoff election.
- All RCV votes are counted equally and as cast, never ignored.
- 94% of the time, the RCV winner had the most first place rankings and would have won in the current, single choice system.

DOES RCV VIOLATE THE ONE PERSON ONE VOTE PRINCIPLE?

- Every court that has examined the issue has upheld RCV.
- Every vote counts one time and one time only.

DOES RCV FAVOR ONE PARTY OVER THE OTHER OR HURT PARTIES?

- RCV results in majority rule— the whole point of representative democracy.
- RCV produces consensus candidates who have broad support.
- RCV primaries improve party performance in general elections.
- RCV strengthens parties through competition and benefits all voters.

Want to learn more about RCV?

Visit our website:

ctvotersfirst.org

