

May 20, 2026

Congressional Election Dates Set

U.S. House seats will be on the November ballot as an open primary

The election for Louisiana’s six U.S. House seats, postponed amid the chaotic fallout from the U.S. Supreme Court ruling that declared the congressional map unconstitutional, has been rescheduled for the fall.

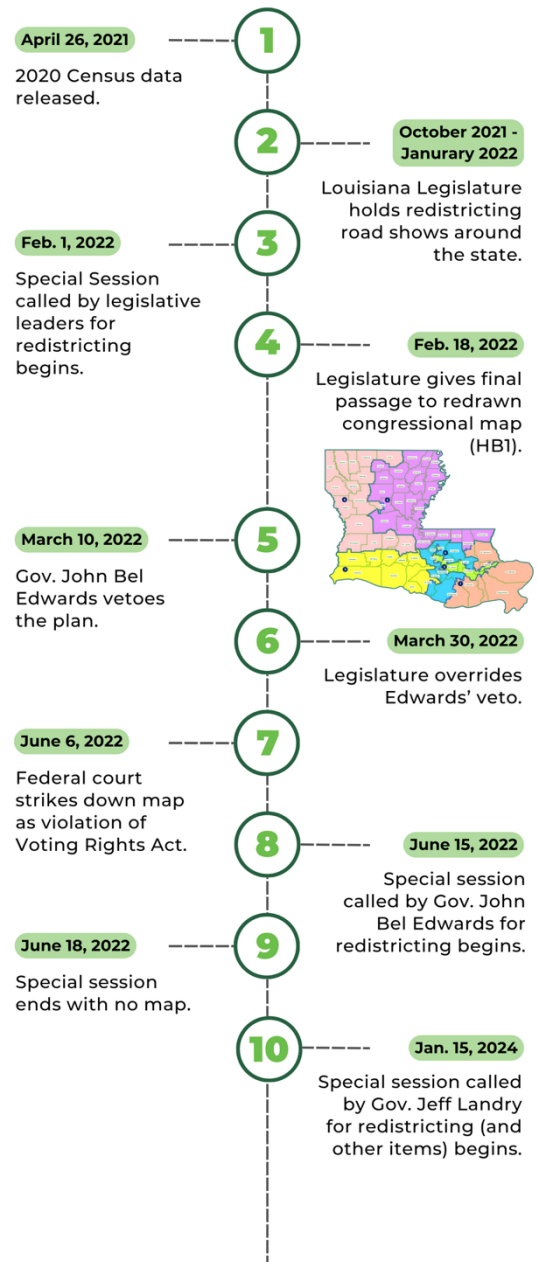
Voters will cast ballots for the races in the Nov. 3 election.

Candidates for the six seats will run under Louisiana’s traditional open primary system, where all contenders face off on the same ballot regardless of party, rather than under a planned closed party primary system. If no candidate reaches more than 50% of the vote, the top two vote-getters will face each other in a Dec. 12 runoff election.

Still uncertain is what the U.S. House map will look like, as lawmakers continue to debate redesigned district lines in the ongoing regular legislative session.

The Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana strongly urges the governor, lawmakers and the Secretary of State’s Office to set aside money for an extensive outreach campaign to educate voters about the ballot changes and the district changes that will be enacted.

This election cycle – with the rollout of new closed party primaries for some offices combined with the U.S. House election delay and planned map changes – has been confusing enough to people who don’t have the time to follow the intricacies of redistricting debates. Elected officials owe constituents as much information as possible.



Redistricting Uncertainty

The shape of the U.S. House districts has been a point of contention since lawmakers began their redistricting work in a 2022 special session. The district lines have been debated across five sessions since the release of new U.S. Census data.

The House and Senate [passed a map in 2022](#), which maintained the five majority-Republican districts and one majority-Black, majority-Democrat district based in New Orleans. A few months later, a federal judge reviewing a challenge of the configuration ruled the map a violation of the federal Voting Rights Act, requiring the creation of a second majority-Black district in a state where about one-third of the population is Black.

When he took office in 2024, Gov. Jeff Landry called a [special session to redraw](#) the map to comply with the judge's ruling. The House and Senate agreed to create a second majority-Black district that stretched from Baton Rouge through Alexandria up to Shreveport. Another lawsuit was filed, and the U.S. Supreme Court in April ruled the new map was an unconstitutional racial gerrymander in a decision that reinterpreted and neutered the Voting Rights Act.

Rescheduled Election

In response to the high court decision, after more than 40,000 absentee ballots already had been cast and early voting was about to begin, Landry issued an executive order suspending the election for the six U.S. House seats, while allowing all other elections scheduled for the May 16 ballot to move forward. Lawsuits were filed to challenge that decision and are pending.

The House and Senate last week followed Landry's order by amending [an elections bill](#) nearing final passage with the plans for how to handle the postponed election, shifting the seats to the November ballot. Landry signed the measure into law the next day.

The bill officially canceled the May and June closed party primary elections for the U.S. House seats and declared any ballots cast for those six races are void, won't be counted and aren't public record. Candidates who paid qualifying fees to run in the election will receive reimbursement. A new candidate sign-up period for the seats will be held from Aug. 5-7.

The races will be conducted as open primaries for this election cycle, under the legislation signed into law, with plans to return the U.S. House seats to [closed party primaries](#) after this year.

Meanwhile, the majority-Republican Legislature is advancing a new congressional map that likely will look similar to the map originally passed in 2022.

Voters could have a tough time navigating through all the upheaval. PAR hopes public officials invest significant time and resources to making sure they understand what happened.

Research provided by the Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana. For more information, please call 225-926-8414 or visit www.parlouisiana.org.

