Important Election Changes for 2012

	Party Primary System (Old)	Top-Two Primary System (New)
Who can I vote for?	Any candidate running for partisan office with the same party affiliation that you are registered with **and** any candidate for non-partisan offices on the ballot.	Any candidate running for President and County Central Committee representing the same party preference that you are registered with **and** any candidate for voter-nominated and non-partisan offices on the ballot.
Which offices are voted on by voters of the same party only?	**Partisan Offices** • President/Vice President • U.S. House of Representatives • United States Senator • Member of the State Assembly • State Senator • Attorney General • Member of the Board of Equalization • Controller • State Treasurer • Secretary of State • Lieutenant Governor • Governor • County Party Central Committee	**Party Nominated Offices (Formerly referred to as Partisan)** • President/Vice President • County Party Central Committee
Which offices are voted on by all voters, regardless of party?	**Non-Partisan Offices** • Judicial • School • Countywide • Municipal	**Voter Nominated Offices (Formerly referred to as Partisan)** • U.S. House of Representatives • United States Senator • Member of the State Assembly • State Senator • Attorney General • Member of the Board of Equalization • Controller • State Treasurer • Secretary of State • Lieutenant Governor • Governor **Non-Partisan Offices** • Judicial • School • Countywide • Municipal

Important Election Changes for 2012

	Party Primary System (Old)	Top-Two Primary System (New)
Which candidates advance to the General Election?	• For partisan offices only, the candidate from each party that received the highest number of votes at the Primary Election advanced to the General Election. • For non-partisan offices, the candidate that receives a majority of the vote at the Primary Election wins. Non-partisan contests do not appear on the General Ballot unless there is need for a run-off election.	• For party nominated offices, the one (1) candidate from each party that receive the highest number of votes at the Primary Election advance to the General Election • For voter nominated offices, the two (2) candidates regardless of party preference that receive the highest number of votes advance to the General Election. • For non-partisan offices, the candidate that receives a majority of the vote at the Primary Election wins. Non-partisan contests do not appear on the General Ballot unless there is need for a run-off election.

What information appears on the official ballot about each candidate?	• Name
	
	• Optional Ballot Designation – describing the candidates principal occupation, vocation or profession
		• Name
		
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		• Party Preference – voter-nominated offices ONLY, a candidate can choose to have their party preference as they are registered appear on the ballot. One of the following statements will appear with their name on the official ballot:
		
		   o "My party preference is the _____ Party." When a candidate is registered with a political party and chooses to have it appear on the ballot the name of that party will fill in the blank space. If the candidate is registered with a party but does not want it to be printed on the ballot, the blank space will be left blank.
		
		   o "No Party Preference"
		   When a candidate is registered with no party preference (formerly referred to as decline to state).

When can write-in candidates run?	• Write-in candidates are eligible to run in any contest at any election.	• For party nominated offices write-in candidates are eligible to run at any election. • For voter nominated offices, write-in candidates are eligible to run only at the Primary Election. Write-in candidates are not allowed at the General Election.