



DAVID YATES
JEFFERSON COUNTY CLERK

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Communications, Media, & Public Relations
Jefferson County Clerk's Office
Media calls/texts: (502) 648-0525
media@jeffersoncountyclerk.org

Jefferson County Clerk David Yates Highlights Smooth and Successful 2026 Primary Election

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — May 20, 2026 — Jefferson County Clerk David Yates praised the handling and operations of the 2026 Primary Election. Early feedback from voters and election workers indicates one of the most efficient primary elections in recent years. Preliminary turnout numbers show that 151,287 voters cast ballots in the 2026 primary out of an estimated 585,000 registered voters in Jefferson County. This includes an estimated 99,193 Democrats, 44,289 Republicans, and 7,597 independents. Clerk Yates emphasized that these figures are preliminary and will be updated as official canvassing continues. “Seeing 25 percent of voters turn out for a primary shows real momentum in Jefferson County. Our community is engaged, paying attention, and showing up—and that’s exactly how democracy stays strong,” said Yates.

The 2026 primary marked the first nonpartisan elections for Louisville Mayor and Louisville Metro Council, making approximately 75,000 independent voters newly eligible to participate in the primary process.

Comparison to 2022 Primary Turnout

For context, the 2022 primary election saw 130,808 total votes cast, including 87,464 Democrats and 40,149 Republicans. There were 15.7 percent more votes cast in 2026, which equates to about 20,000 more people. The increase in participation this year reflects both expanded eligibility and strong voter engagement.

Enhanced preparation and seamless processes

Clerk Yates confirmed that the voting equipment performed as expected – delivering secure and accurate results during the May 19 primary. The Jefferson County Clerk’s Office worked closely with Election Systems & Software (ES&S) to enhance the voter check-in process and ensure a seamless performance of the equipment. The result was a positive experience for voters and poll workers at the polling place.

“We’re thankful for Jefferson County’s partnership and the opportunity to support their election efforts. The performance of the technology on Election Day reflects the county’s strong preparation,” said Beth Lantry, ES&S senior vice president of development. “We’re proud to have helped deliver a seamless experience for voters, allowing them to check-in and cast their ballots easily and independently.”

Positive Voter Experience

Election workers across the county reported steady, wait-free voting throughout the day. Many voters noted the smooth check-in process and the return of the popular “I Voted” stickers.

“The primary demonstrates what is possible when we take problems seriously, work collaboratively, and commit to restoring voter confidence,” said Clerk Yates. “I’m proud of our team, our election workers, and our community for making this a model election day.”

Next Steps

Preliminary results will continue to be updated as absentee ballots, provisional ballots, and final precinct reports are verified. Official results will be certified in accordance with Kentucky law on Friday, May 22, 2026.

To view results of the Primary Election in Jefferson County, go to <https://elections.jeffersoncountyclerk.org/2026-primary>

###