Plain Language Definitions
April 2026 Special Election Ballot

Virginians can vote in the upcoming statewide Special Election on a proposed amendment to the Virginia Constitution.
Election Day is April 21, 2026. Early Voting starts on March 6.
The last day to request an absentee ballot is April 10.

The ballot will read:

> Should the Constitution of Virginia be amended to allow the General Assembly to temporarily adopt new congressional districts to restore fairness in the upcoming elections, while ensuring Virginia's standard redistricting process resumes for all future redistricting after the 2030 census?

Here are plain language definitions for some of the words used in the ballot:

What is a special election?
It is a vote that needs to happen before the time of the regular election.

What is a proposed amendment?
It is an idea for a change. In this situation, a group of people has an idea for a change to the Constitution of Virginia. They are asking voters to think about their idea and then make a decision, to vote yes (for the change) or no (against the change).

What is the Constitution of Virginia?
It is a list of the most important laws in Virginia.

What does amended mean?
It means to be changed. For example, if I want to know if the bus schedule will change, if I could ask, "Will the bus schedule be amended?"

March 30, 2026

What is the General Assembly?
It is the part of the Virginia government that makes laws.

What does adopt mean?
In this situation, adopt means to start something. For example, if a student can't hear what someone is saying, the teacher could adopt a rule to be quiet when someone else is talking.

What is a congressional district?
Congressional is another word for Congress. Congress is the part of the United States government that makes laws. Congress has two parts: the House of Representatives and the Senate.

A congressional district is a geographic area within a state. Each congressional district elects one member to the House of Representatives.

Virginia has eleven congressional districts. To see a map of your congressional district, visit house.gov, enter your zip code in the banner at the top of the page, and select LOOK UP.

What is redistricting?
It is changing the boundaries of congressional districts. It is also known as "drawing the lines" of the congressional districts. It generally happens every 10 years following the national census. However, redistricting can occur at other times.

What is the national census?
A national census is a count of all people living in the United States. The next national census will take place in 2030.