



Fact Sheet on Mayoral Succession and Potential Special Election

Updated February 18, 2025

Summary

If New York City's mayor resigns or is removed **before** March 26, 2025 and the mayor's office is considered legally "vacated," the public advocate becomes mayor until a new mayor is elected in a special election held within about 80 days. That special election uses ranked choice voting, and any American citizen and New York City resident who submits at least 3,750 qualified petition signatures to the New York City Board of Elections is eligible to run.

If the mayor's office is vacated **on or after** March 26, 2025, the public advocate becomes mayor until a new mayor is voted on at the November 4, 2025 election, after also having run in the primary election.

(Note that New York City has never had a mayor removed by the governor or by the City's "inability" process. Therefore, in the event the mayor leaves office other than by resigning, it is unclear to us at what point exactly the mayoralty is considered "vacated.")

[Chapter 1, Section 10](#) of the New York City Charter provides the rules of succession when there is a vacancy in the office of the mayor. If the mayor's office is vacated, the public advocate is first in the line of succession, followed by the NYC comptroller in the event the office of public advocate is also vacant. The interim mayor serves until a new mayor has been elected and certified.

When is the special election?

The rules of succession for the mayor also include the timing under which special elections can occur. Within **three days** of a mayoral vacancy, the public advocate or other successor must proclaim the date of a special election.

Below are the two scenarios for filling a mayoral vacancy that occurs in 2025:

- **If the vacancy occurs before March 26, 2025** (90 days before June 24, 2025 primary) a **nonpartisan special election** using ranked choice voting must be called and held on the first Tuesday within about 80 days after the vacancy occurs. The public advocate serving as acting mayor has some discretion, however, to move this date to encourage turnout. They could call the election for a minimum of 60 days after the

Mayoral Special Elections

proclamation, or an additional 10 days after the first Tuesday at least 80 days after the vacancy occurs. **The winner of this non-partisan ranked choice special election serves as mayor until December 31, 2025** (the remainder of the 2022-2025 term).

- **If the vacancy occurs on or after March 26, 2025**, the public advocate serves as acting mayor until the winner of the 2025 general election is certified. Until then, **candidates for mayor would follow the regular process of being selected in a partisan primary election on June 24th using ranked choice voting, followed by the November 4, 2025 general election.** *Because 2025 is the last year of the four-year term, the winning candidate would take office early in November or December 2025 before the next full term begins January 1, 2026, and serve a full term.*

How do candidates qualify for the nonpartisan special election?

Candidates must submit a minimum of 3,750 qualified petition signatures to the New York City Board of Elections, as required by [Chapter 46, §1057-b](#) of the New York City Charter. Special elections are nonpartisan by virtue of candidates filing petitions as independent candidates, essentially creating their own party names rather than using the current major party names.

Infographic

NYC Mayoral Special Elections Timeline

