

# Ranked Choice Voting Amendment

## Supplemental Information

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## Ranked Choice Voting Explainer Videos, etc

### Single Transferable Vote

(great for electing multiple people at the same time for multiple positions, such as DNC reps or convention delegates. This method of voting functions the same as “Instant Runoff Voting” when electing a single winner such as International Chair. Therefore it is very versatile)

- **Explainer Videos**

- [Politics in the Animal Kingdom: Single Transferable Vote](#) (~7 min 10 sec) **RECOMMENDED**
- [An introduction to proportional representation](#) (~6 min, 7 sec)
- [What is STV? Single Transferable Vote Explained...](#) (~2 min 11 sec)
- [How Instant Runoff Voting works 2.0: Multiple winners](#) - despite the misleading title, this video discusses how surplus votes above the quota (winning threshold) are distributed in Single Transferable Vote.

- Currently used in:

- STV is used for government elections in Cambridge, Massachusetts; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Scotland; Australia; Ireland; N. Ireland; and Malta.

### Instant Runoff Voting (called Ranked Choice Voting in USA)

- **Explainer Videos**

- [What is Ranked Choice Voting?](#) by FairVote.org (~2 min 30 sec)
- [Elizabeth Warren Explains Ranked Choice Voting \(with Maura Healey\)](#) (~2 min 20 sec)
- [Ranked Choice Voting vs The Establishment](#) by Represent US (~4 min)

- **Locations in USA where Instant Runoff Voting (called Ranked Choice Voting in the USA) is used:**

- [https://www.fairvote.org/where\\_is\\_ranked\\_choice\\_voting\\_used](https://www.fairvote.org/where_is_ranked_choice_voting_used)

Sample text that explains the details of Instant Runoff Voting (called Ranked Choice Voting in USA) and that I believe includes the concepts of Single Transferable Vote, such as distributing surplus votes and the idea of calculating a “quota” winning threshold that is less than a majority for elections with multiple winners.

- <https://fairvote.app.box.com/v/RCV-Model-Statute>

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## Q&A about Amendment

If you, the reader, have a question related to Ranked Choice Voting or this specific amendment, please add it to this FAQ by typing directly in the document or adding a comment, or e-mailing it to the author, [eid.helps@gmail.com](mailto:eid.helps@gmail.com)

If you read something that isn't clear please add a comment to the google doc or contact the author.  
(Question order or text may be edited for clarity)

## Executive Summary (Presentation Slides):

[click here for slides used to present during bylaws committee discussion.](#)

## Scope of Influence:

### 1. Q: Does this amendment apply to DPCA meetings?

A: Yes. "Article Three: Meetings" talks about rules for a DPCA meeting. "Section 3.6 (Representation and Voting)" is part of article three. Additionally text for some votes held at DPCA meetings has been modified in the bylaws amendment explicitly to say "ranked choice single transferable vote".

- a. Related question: Does this amendment force ALL votes at a DPCA meeting to use Ranked Choice Voting?
- b. Related Question: Does this amendment require Ranked Choice Voting to be used needlessly? What if there are only one or two candidates running for a position?

### 2. Q: Does this amendment force ALL votes at a DPCA meeting to use "Ranked Choice Single Transferable Voting"?

A: No it does not. In cases where the bylaws contain phrases such as "majority vote" the choice to use Ranked Choice Voting or some other method of voting is left up to the NEC or equivalent group.

- a. 3.6 -> e -> ii mentions that the choice is left up to the NEC or equivalent group if not explicitly stated in the bylaws.
- b. 3.6 -> e -> i defines various winning thresholds and voting methods separately and explicitly notes that ballot voting includes ranked choice voting.
- c. 3.6 -> e -> ii -> 2 gives some advice that Ranked Choice Single Transferable Vote is preferable to use in some cases, but it is advice only.

### 3. Q: If this amendment is passed, will it require "Ranked Choice Single Transferable Voting" to be used for elections in this same DPCA (& Regional) meeting?

- a. It is the opinion of the amendment author that the current bylaws already support ranked choice voting so this question is moot. See question: In the current bylaws, if an election takes place by a "simple majority vote" or "majority vote" can Ranked Choice Voting be used?
- b. However if answering this question JUST by the context of this amendment, then the answer is maybe. It's debatable.

- i. Reasons why it might NOT affect currently planned elections:
  1. Amendments are voted on after DPCA Officer elections are held.
  2. Amendments are voted on before DPCA Officer elections are held but a separate motion is made to not have this amendment come into effect until after this DPCA meeting is finished.
  3. This year's NEC may not have had time to consider how to run elections using Ranked Choice Voting and has not had time to consider or prepare "ranked choice single transferable vote" ballots.
  4. This amendment states that the NEC (Nominations and Election Committee) should give notice of the method of elections being held when they solicit candidates. Since the NEC did not give notice of using "ranked choice single transferable vote" for this year's DPCA officer election, the NEC should continue to use the method of voting that it was originally intending to use..
- ii. Reasons why it might affect currently planned elections:
  1. Amendments are voted on before DPCA Officer elections are held.
  2. Amendments are voted on after DPCA Officer elections are held using some other method of voting such as "select one option from a list". However a motion is made to redo elections using the "ranked choice single transfer vote" mentioned in this amendment.

#### **4. Q: Does this amendment apply to Regional Meetings?**

A: Yes. In two ways.

- Section 6.4 (Regional Meetings and Communication) of the current bylaws says: "The rules applicable to such meetings shall be the same as those applicable to DPCA meetings.". For example since this amendment has DPCA meetings using Ranked Choice Single Transferable Voting to elect DNC representatives, so too would Regional Meetings.

- Furthermore, this amendment explicitly modifies "Section 6.2 (Regional Vice Chair)" to say that a ranked choice single transferable vote should be used for electing the Regional Vice Chair.

- a. Related Question: Does this amendment require Ranked Choice Voting to be used needlessly?  
What if there are only one or two candidates running for a position?

#### **5. Q: Does this amendment force Country Committees to use Ranked Choice Voting?**

A: No It would not. Here is why: Country committee rules are defined in their bylaws. This amendment deals with rules for DPCA meetings and Regional Meetings.

- If a country committee's bylaws say that their meetings will follow the same rules as a DPCA meeting, then this amendment would apply to the country committee to the extent that there are definitions of terms such as "majority" and methods of voting. There is no direct language in this amendment to force a country committee to use Ranked Choice Voting.

- Otherwise whatever rules are in the country committee's bylaws would stand.

- a. Either way, it is the amendment's hope that country level NEC could choose to use Ranked Choice Voting based on the precedent of how global DPCA meetings define terms related to majorities and methods of voting and not feel like they are forced to use a particular method of

voting.

**6. Q: Does this amendment require Ranked Choice Voting to be used needlessly? What if there are only one or two candidates running for a position?**

A: No It does not. Newly added Section 3.6 -> e -> ii -> 4 says:

“Ranked Choice Voting does not need to be used in situations where taking into consideration a voter’s preferences beyond the first choice would not affect the outcome. For example: selecting one winner from two choices. ”.

**7. Q: Does this amendment force the International Executive Committee to use Ranked Choice Voting?**

A: No. It does not. Section “Section 4.11 (Responsibilities of the Executive Committee)” of the current bylaws says “The Executive Committee shall establish its own rules” The Executive Committee is not forced to use Ranked Choice Voting for any decision. The amendment recognizes that many votes taken by the Excom follow Roberts Rules of Order and are quite procedural. The text added at the end of 4.11 is intended to give a “helpful” nudge to the Excom to let them know that they can choose to use Ranked Choice Voting.

- a. Possible scenarios where the Executive Committee might choose to use Ranked Choice Single Transferable Voting would be if the Excom were to select people to serve on a committee or group, or to select a person to do some job within DA.

**Definitions:**

**8. Q: Why does this amendment remove the word “simple” from “simple majority”?**

A: “majority” and “simple majority” mean the same thing. Currently both phrases are used in the bylaws. By using different terms that mean the same thing, the bylaws may confuse some readers to wonder if the two terms have different meanings.

- a. This amendment unifies voting language by changing all references of “simple majority vote” to “majority vote”. Note: Robert’s Rules of Order does not use the phrase “simple majority”.
- b. Furthermore this amendment defines those both of terms as equal to each other to make sure there is no confusion now and in the future.

**9. Q: After this amendment passes, in the bylaws, if a vote is supposed to be a “simple majority vote” or a “majority vote”, can Ranked Choice Voting be used?**

A: Yes. For a few reasons.

1. This amendment explicitly says that a ballot vote can be done using Ranked Choice Voting. See section 3.6 -> e -> i -> 2 -> a. This definition is in the section regarding voting at DPCA meetings. In the current bylaws, Regional meetings state that they follow the same rules as DPCA meetings.
2. For all of the same reasons stated in the following Q&A: “In the current bylaws, if an election takes place by a “simple majority vote” or “majority vote” can Ranked Choice Voting be used? “.
3. Related Questions:
  - i. Why does this amendment remove the word “simple” from “simple majority”?

**10. Q: Why does this amendment use the term “Ranked Choice Single Transferable vote” instead of “Single Transferable Vote”?**

A: To better help the reader visualize what sort of vote is taking place. The definition section of the amendment text defines these two terms to be equal to each other.

**11. Q: After this amendment passes, in the bylaws, can “Instant Runoff Voting” or “Ranked Choice Single Transferable Vote” be used where the phrase “Ranked Choice Voting” is written?**

A: Yes. This amendment, through wording and indentation, considers both “Instant Runoff Voting” and “Ranked Choice Single Transferable Vote” to be specializations of the broader term “Ranked Choice Voting”. This amendment in Section 3.6 -> e -> i -> 2 has language indicating such. However, to avoid confusion over the interpretation of “ranked choice voting”, the amendment text explicitly calls for “ranked choice single transferable vote” to be used in circumstances instead of using the term “ranked choice voting”. When the amendment is talking more generally about Ranked Choice Voting, the phrase “Ranked Choice Voting” is used.

- a. Related Question: Why doesn’t this amendment specify the details of how “Ranked Choice Voting”, “Ranked Choice Single Transferable Vote” or “Instant Runoff Voting” work?

**12. Q: After this amendment passes, in the bylaws, can “Instant Runoff Voting” be used instead of “Ranked Choice Single Transferable Vote”, or vice-versa?**

A: No. While both are forms of Ranked Choice Voting there are some important differences between them, which makes them non-interchangeable.

- a. Related Question: Election Theory: What’s the difference between “Instant Runoff Voting (referred to as Ranked Choice Voting in the USA)” and “Single Transferable Vote”?

**13. Q: Is the term plurality used anywhere in the bylaws? Why does this amendment define it?**

A: It is not used in the current bylaws. It is being defined because it is a common method of determining the winner in votes held in the United States and since this amendment is adding a definition section for winning thresholds, it seemed pertinent to add the term, as well as some other phrases that have the same meaning.

## Other Questions:

### 14. Q: Why does this amendment NOT specify the details of how “Ranked Choice Voting”, “Ranked Choice Single Transferable Vote” or “Instant Runoff Voting” work?

A: Similar to the constitution of the United States, the DA charter and bylaws serve as high level instructions for how to govern.

- This amendment, in Section 3.6 -> e -> ii -> 1, contains language to delegate deciding the details of implementing a method of voting to the NEC or equivalent group.

Also of note, the current bylaws do not define how any other method of voting is implemented.

### 15. Q: Does this amendment require voters to rank some or all of the choices on their ballot?

A: No. It does not. This is considered an implantation detail and left up to the NEC or equivalent group to decide. This decision may change based on the number of choices to select from, the voter’s familiarity with each of those choices, whether a separate vote is being held to select finalists followed by a separate vote to select winners, etc.

### 16. Q: Why does this amendment require that all “Ranked Choice Single Transferable Vote” elections include a candidate named: *“none of the remaining candidates are acceptable. I wish for further discussion OR to elect no one today.”*

A: Will break this answer down into a couple of bullet points, to be read in order.

- a. “ranked choice single transferable vote” (and other forms of Ranked Choice Voting) will always select a winner.
  - i. The winner will have a majority of the votes on the **last** round of evaluating everyone’s ballots. This majority may be less than the majority calculated on the **first round** of evaluating everyone’s ballots because a voter who has had all of his/her ranked candidates eliminated abstains from future rounds of voting.
- b. If a voter finds all candidates or all remaining candidates unacceptable, and wants to demand new candidates or discussion before selecting a winner, there is no way for the voter to express that opinion in a traditional ranked choice vote. This may be ‘ok’ for larger scale elections held at a city, state, or country level.
- c. However DPCA is a much smaller voting body. The “spirit” of the current version of the bylaws wants at least a majority (>50%) of DPCA members who are casting votes to approve of a candidate. To give DPCA voters a chance to reject all remaining candidates as unacceptable and opt for future discussion or to elect no one, this amendment requires that an extra



candidate called *“none of the remaining candidates are acceptable. I wish for further discussion OR to elect no one today.”* be added to the list of options.

- i. Note: in an election to select one winner:
  1. If this “candidate” wins the “ranked choice single transferable vote” then then it means that the voters wish to halt the current election for discussion or postponement.
- ii. Note: In an election that selects multiple winners:
  1. Any winners selected in rounds prior to the candidate named “none of the remaining candidates are acceptable. I wish for further discussion OR to elect no one today.” winner should be considered valid.
  2. Since all rounds are automatically resolved at once by voting software, any additional winners select in rounds after *“none of the remaining candidates are acceptable. I wish for further discussion OR to elect no one today.”* wins should not be considered actual winners because the voters chose to halt the election at a previous round.
  3. Election to select remaining winners has been put on hold for further discussion to take place.

**17. Q: Why does this amendment add language to let voters and candidates see anonymized election data and challenge the results of an election?**

A: To give everyone involved confidence that the election took place correctly and fairly. Particularly when officially switching to a new method of voting for elections, it is important to provide transparency and provide an official means of resolving disputes. See amendment sections 4.2 (e) and (f) for specifics.

**18. Q: After this amendment passes, can DA use one “Ranked Choice Single Transferable Vote” to select finalists AND THEN have a separate second “Ranked Choice Single Transferable Vote” to select a winner or winners?**

A: This amendment neither explicitly prohibits or permits this sort of voting. The amendment says to use a “ranked choice single transferable vote” for certain election votes. This amendment has language to leave implantation details up to the NEC or equivalent body. (see section 3.6 -> e -> ii -> 1) It is the amendment author’s opinion that this question is an implantation detail because all voting is being done using “ranked choice single transferable vote”.

- a. Advantages of using two separate “ranked choice single transferable vote” questions
  - i. Finalists could be allowed to give extra speeches to voters. This may help voters make up their mind.
  - ii. If there are too many candidates initially, voters may not be able to have informed, educated, opinions about all candidates to accurately rank all in order of preference.
- b. Disadvantages of using two separate “ranked choice single transferable vote” questions

- i. If DA pays a fee to use voting software every time they hold an election, this would increase (double) the money needed. However compared to traditional voting over multiple rounds it would probably still be cheaper.

**19. Q: Why does this amendment require the NEC to announce the method of voting used when announcing elections or when seeking candidates?**

- a. A: To avoid surprises among the voters and candidates on how the election will be run. Even though the bylaws specify that “ranked choice single transferable voting” be used for elections not all voters or candidates may read the bylaws and realize that.
- b. It also gives candidates and their supporters a chance to talk to voters, seeking to be the voter’s second choice or third choice, etc on the ballot question.

**20. Q: Isn’t it expensive to implement Ranked Choice Voting? I’m worried Democrats Abroad doesn’t have the money to fund such a change.**

A: There are a few ways to answer this question:

- a. Answer 1: It would be possible for the DPCA to adjust the cost of the suggested donation for its meetings to take into account any costs associated with using Ranked Choice Voting.
- b. Answer 2a: One voting ballot distributed to voters could contain multiple voting questions. I.e. one ballot could have multiple questions on it, with each question asking people to vote for one position such as International Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Council. Some voting software, such as Election Buddy, charges for each election ballot distributed to voters and not for each question written on the ballot. Thus you could pay 1 fee to conduct elections for multiple positions at the same time.
- c. Answer 2b: It’s not as expensive as you think.
  - i. [Oppa Vote](#)
    1. FREE! 25 voters      10 candidates
      - a. Should any committee or other small group choose to use ranked choice voting, they could probably do so for free.
    2. \$10    125 voters      20 candidates
    3. \$20    250 voters      40 candidates
    4. \$30    375 voters      60 candidates
    5. \$40    500 voters      80 candidates
  - ii. [Ranked Choice Voting App](#)
    1. Cost: FREE! (It’s a bit simpler than Oppa Vote)
    2. Click for [Instructions for using app to hold a secure election](#)
    3. Only useable for Instant Run Off Voting though.
  - iii. <https://www.eballot.com/>
    1. April 23rd 2021: Elliott Contacted sales to see if a free demo is possible
    2. \$210 for a one year subscription for 250 voters. Can hold unlimited votes.
      - a. Perhaps all of DA can share this one subscription for holding different votes at DPCA, international, regional levels, etc.

- iv. <https://electionbuddy.com>
  - 1. <https://electionbuddy.com/features/voting-systems/stv-voting>
  - 2. Supports single transferable vote (but only one specific version)
  - 3. Has option to require voters to rank all choices.
  - 4. Has option to let voters NOT rank all choices.
  - 5. Each voter gets an email with unique link.
  - 6. Each voter can forward their email to another person who acts as their proxy
  - 7. Cannot adjust voting weights after an election starts. Need to stop election first.
- v. **TODO: fill in details from more companies that offer voting services. (suggestions welcome)**

## 21. Q: Why is this amendment changing “Section (6.1 The Regions)”?

A: This is a minor formatting change. The location of the ‘(’ is different here than in all other sections of the bylaws. The “(” should be after the section numbering.

## Q&A about Ranked Choice Voting - NOT Amendment Specific

## 22. Q: What’s the difference between “Instant Runoff Voting (often referred to as Ranked Choice Voting in the USA)” and “Single Transferable Vote”?

A: When voting to select a single winner, these two voting methods function the same. However when voting to select multiple winners there are some differences.

- a. Traditional implementations of “instant runoff voting” do not transfer surplus votes from a winning candidate to the other remaining candidates. This penalizes voters for supporting an overly popular candidate and does not accurately reflect the intention of all the voters. There are some great explainer videos for “single transferable vote”, linked to from this google doc, that go over this.
- b. Please let me know if you are aware of additional differences.

## 23. Q: Does a voter have to rank all choices on their ballot?

A: No. Traditional implementations of ranked choice voting do not make this requirement. There can be advantages and disadvantages to doing so. This bylaws amendment makes no requirement to do so. Nor does this bylaws amendment require voters to rank a minimum number of choices. This amendment leaves this sort of implantation detail up to the NEC or equivalent group that decides voting rules. If you think this amendment should explicitly require or not require voters to rank all choices, please let the author know.

- a. REQUIRING a voter to rank all choices
  - i. Pros
    - 1. The majority will not change between rounds of evaluating ranked choice ballots. This may make it easier for all voters to understand the outcome of a ranked choice vote.

- ii. Cons:
  - 1. For questions where there is a large number of choices, such as selecting delegates for the DNC convention, it may be hard for a voter to accurately rank each choice in order of preference.
- b. Related Questions:
  - i. Can a person be elected with less than a majority of the votes using Instant Runoff Voting or Single Transferable Vote?
  - ii. Why doesn't this amendment specify the details of how "Ranked Choice Voting", "Ranked Choice Single Transferable Vote" or "Instant Runoff Voting" work?

24. Q: Is it better for a voter to rank only his/her top choice? Or as many choices as possible?

- a. A: It is best for the voter to rank as many acceptable choices as possible on the ballot. This will increase the likelihood that one of those choices will become the winner. If a voter only ranks his top choice, and that choice is eliminated, then the voter is abstaining from future rounds of voting.  
Also, recall that section 4.2 (d) of the amendment gives the voter a chance to say that no remaining candidate(s) are acceptable in an election vote.
- b. In a hypothetical election with 7 candidates, a voter could think of his/her rankings as follows :
  - i. Your first choice candidate is the one you LOVE
  - ii. Your second choice (and maybe third choice) candidates are ones you LIKE
  - iii. Your fourth choice (and maybe fifth choice) candidates are ones you can TOLERATE
  - iv. If the remaining candidates are totally unacceptable, a voter can rank as their next choice the candidate called "*none of the remaining candidates are acceptable. I wish for further discussion OR to elect no one today.*". (This option is unique to Democrats Abroad's ranked choice elections)

25. Q: What advice would you give to candidates and their staff/surrogates?

A: Talk to voters and ask them to support you as their 2nd choice or 3rd choice.

26. Q: In a single winner election, can a person be elected with less than a majority of the votes using Instant Runoff Voting or Single Transferable Vote?

A: see below:

- a. Standard Voting Rules for single winner elections, i.e. electing the DA International Chair:
  - i. The winner will have a majority of the valid votes cast on the **last round** of evaluating everyone's choices.
  - ii. The majority on the **last round** may be different from the majority used on the **first round** of evaluating everyone's choices because some voters may choose to NOT rank

all choices. Thus if those voters' preferred candidate(s) get eliminated, then those voters stop voting in subsequent rounds of ranked choice voting.

- iii. The amendment attempts to explain this in newly added text. Exceptions
- b. Exceptions:
  - i. The NEC or similar voting body could change the winning threshold rules.
  - ii. As an example, the [Republican party of Utah](#) uses Instant Runoff Voting (known as Ranked Choice Voting in the USA) with a 60% threshold in their primaries.
- c. Note: The Ranked Choice Voting Amendment includes language to try and make this clearer and less of a problem in two ways
  - i. The amendment explains how the calculation of a majority may change from "round to round" if not all voters rank all candidates. section 3.6 -> e -> i -> 3
  - ii. The amendment requires that in elections there is an extra candidate named "none of the remaining candidates are acceptable. I wish for further discussion OR to elect no one today."

## Example: Voters vote for their favorite color

This example shows how the number of votes needed to win can change as everyone's Ranked Choice ballots are evaluated over multiple "rounds" if some voters choose not to rank all candidates

|   |     |      |       |  |
|---|-----|------|-------|--|
|   |     |      |       |  |
| <b>Round 1 of evaluation (initial ballots)</b>  |     |      |       |  |
|   | Red | Blue | Green | Comments:  |
| voter 1   | 1   |      |       | voter 1 only likes red and refuses to rank blue and green.                           |
| voter 2   |     |      | 1     |  |
| voter 3   | 2   | 1    | 3     |  |
| voter 4   |     |      | 1     |  |
| voter 5   | 2   | 1    |       |  |
| voter 6   |     | 1    | 2     |  |
| voter 7   | 2   |      | 1     |  |
| voter 8   | 1   |      | 2     |  |
| # of valid votes for each candidate   | 2   | 3    | 3     |  |
| # of valid votes TOTAL:   | 8   |      |       |  |
| quota needed to win: (# of valid votes / (2)) + 1 =   |     |      | 5     | since this election is to select one winner, the "quota" is the same as a "majority" |
| Result: No candidate has the number of votes needed to meet or exceed the quota this round. Red is least popular and eliminated |     |      |       |  |
|   |     |      |       |  |
| <b>Round 2 of evaluation</b>  |     |      |       |  |

|   | Red | Blue | Green | Comments:  |
|---|-----|------|-------|--|
| voter 1   | 4   |      |       | voter 1 did not indicate further preferences. Since voter 1's first choice was eliminated in round 1, voter 1 abstains from this round of voting |
| voter 2   |     |      | 1     |  |
| voter 3   | 2   | 1    | 3     |  |
| voter 4   |     |      | 1     |  |
| voter 5   | 2   | 1    |       |  |
| voter 6   |     | 1    | 2     |  |
| voter 7   | 2   |      | 1     |  |
| voter 8   | T   |      | 1     | voter 8's first choice was eliminated in round 1 so voter 8's vote transfers to the 2nd choice, green  |
| # of valid votes for each candidate   | 0   | 3    | 4     |  |
| # of valid votes TOTAL:   | 7   |      |       | Since voter 1 did not cast a vote this round, the total number of valid votes has decreased  |
| quota needed to win: ( $\#$ of valid votes / (2)) + 1 =   |     |      | 4     | Since voter 1 did not cast a vote this round the quota, the majority, and thus number of votes needed to win has changed                         |
| Result: "green" is elected the winner because it receives enough votes to meet or exceed the quota (and majority) this round. |     |      |       |  |

## 27. Q: In a multi winner election, can a person be elected with less than a majority of the votes using Instant Runoff Voting or Single Transferable Vote?

A: For elections that select multiple winners from a list of options, i.e. the DPCA electing three DNC representatives, by design, each of the winners will have less than a majority of all valid votes. The number of votes needed to win in these elections is called a "quota". I believe a quota is defined as  $((\text{votes} / (\# \text{ positions} + 1) + 1)$ . It represents the minimum number of votes a candidate must receive to win an election. If you consider what percent of the vote each winning candidate received, all of those percents still need to add up to 100%. Thus each winning candidate will receive a smaller % of the vote than a majority (recall majority is a number greater than 50%).

- Example. If 100 people are voting to elect 3 DNC reps, then each of the three winners would need a minimum of  $(100 / (3 + 1) + 1)$  votes. Which simplifies to  $(100 / 4) + 1$ . Thus 26 votes.
- Video: [Politics in the Animal Kingdom: Single Transferable Vote](#) (~ 7min 10 sec)
- Related Questions:
  - What's the difference between "Instant Runoff Voting (often referred to as Ranked Choice Voting in the USA)" and "Single Transferable Vote"?

## Q&A about Current Bylaws (2019) and Ranked Choice Voting

28. Q: In the current bylaws, if an election takes place by a “simple majority vote” or “majority vote” can Ranked Choice Voting be used?

A: When an election is being held to select a single winner, former International Council Tom Schmid and amendment author Elliott Davis believe the answer is yes. Here is why:

- a. First, “simple majority” and “majority” both mean the same thing, more than 50% of the valid votes cast.
- b. Second, “vote” is a generic, nebulous term. There are many methods of conducting a vote. For example, a vote could be a show of hands, or a vote could be a voice vote, or a vote could be by consensus, or a vote could be by indicating your preference somehow on a ballot, etc.
- c. So long as the method of voting being used produces a winner who gets a majority of valid votes then it would fulfill the criteria of a “simple majority vote” or a “majority vote”.
- d. Therefore, Ranked Choice Voting can be used for electing one winner because it is a method of voting that will produce a single winner who has received a majority of the valid votes cast on the last round of evaluating everyone’s preferences. There is nothing in the bylaws that says people must vote by selecting only a single candidate from a list of options.
- e. Related Questions:
  - i. Can a person be elected with less than a majority of the votes using Instant Runoff Voting or Single Transferable Vote?
  - ii. Can we use “Ranked Choice Single Transferable Vote” to narrow the candidates from a large list down to a few finalists AND THEN have a separate ballot vote to select a winner?

29. Q: Does the amendment author have any advice for the NEC to run a Ranked Choice Election this year?

A: Advice is below:

- a. As soon as possible, educate the candidates and the voters:
  - i. Make the announcement stating which elections will use Ranked Choice Voting.
    1. Candidates and their campaign staff/surrogates need time to ask voters to rank them #2 and #3.
    2. Candidates may want to campaign together to ask each others’ voters for those 2nd choice rankings.
  - ii. For each election, also announcement if there will be:
    1. a single Ranked Choice Vote to select a winner
    2. OR if there will one Ranked Choice Vote to select some number of finalists and a 2nd ranked choice vote to select the winner.
  - iii. Make an announcement to strongly encourage voters to rank all acceptable candidates, not just their first choice. Perhaps share some ranked choice explainer videos.
  - iv. For each question on the ballot, announce to voters and candidates the minimum # of candidates that each voter must rank. Could be 0, could be some higher number, could be all the candidates.

- v. Let the voters know what the ballot will look like ahead of time. Make a sample ballot and share screenshots or a PDF version of it.
- vi. Explain to voters that the # of votes that equals a majority or quota on each round of evaluating everyone's ballots can decrease if some voters do not rank all candidates.
- b. When designing each election question on the ballot,
  - i. Follow the advice of the bylaws amendment, sections 4.2 (d), and include an option for voters to select non of the remaining candidates are acceptable.
    - 1. If not following the above advice, try to get voters to rank as many of the candidates as possible by:
      - a. Assuming the number of candidates is a reasonable size, create the ballot questions such that voters are required to rank all candidates.
      - b. If there are too many candidates to reasonably evaluate and rank, require that voters to rank at least their top three to five.
      - c. A voter should not be able to submit their ballot if they have not done the minimum amount of ranking required.
  - ii. The names of all candidates should be displayed in a random order for each voter.
- c. If using Ranked Choice Voting to select X number of finalists, use "single transfer vote" voting method instead of "instant runoff voting" to more accurately reflect the intention of the voters.
- d. When deciding what other rules will be followed in general, please follow the advice of the bylaws amendment, sections 4.2 (e), (f) to give voters more confidence that the election was handled correctly.

**30. Q: Can DA use one "Ranked Choice Single Transferable Vote" to select finalists AND THEN have a separate second "Ranked Choice Single Transferable Vote" to select a winner or winners?**

- a. A: This assumes it has been decided that it is ok to use some form of Ranked Choice Voting. The amendment author believes the answer is yes. However, for this question, it may depend how closely you want to read / interpret the bylaws.
- b. Arguments to answer yes:
  - i. The ultimate process will arrive at a winner who has a majority of votes cast on the last round of the second ranked choice ballot.
  - ii. This process follows along in the "spirit" of using traditional rounds of voting that would take place without using ranked choice voting.
  - iii. When the votes received by all "finalists" are added together it will represent a majority of the voters.
- c. Arguments to answer no:
  - i. If there are two or more finalists, the number of votes received by each finalist will be less than a majority of votes cast. See the following question for details: In a multi winner election, can a person be elected with less than a majority of the votes using Instant Runoff Voting or Single Transferable Vote?
- d. Advice: Use "single transfer vote" voting method instead of "instant runoff voting" to more accurately select the finalists.



## [Link to the PDF version of the Bylaws Amendment](#)

- This is the current version up for consideration.
- It is amendment # 14 in this list.

## [Link to Google Doc version of Bylaws Amendment](#)

- This Google Docs version may differ from a PDF version created for distribution by the bylaws committee.
- The PDF version is the official version of the amendment for consideration.
- At the DPCA meeting, a motion could be made to use a revised version of the amendment. (This might be merited if meaningful updates were made based on the additional feedback from members after the PDF version of the amendment is distributed by the bylaws committee).

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