

# STATE OF NEW YORK

1420

2019-2020 Regular Sessions

## IN ASSEMBLY

January 15, 2019

Introduced by M. of A. SIMON, SEAWRIGHT, RIVERA, NIOU -- Multi-Sponsored  
by -- M. of A. EPSTEIN -- read once and referred to the Committee on  
Election Law

AN ACT to amend the election law, in relation to instant run-off voting  
in the city of New York; and to repeal certain provisions of such law  
relating thereto

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assem-  
bly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Section 6-162 of the election law is REPEALED and a new  
2 section 6-162 is added to read as follows:

3 § 6-162. Primary; New York City, instant run-off voting. 1. In the  
4 city of New York, any city-wide primary elections for the office of  
5 mayor, public advocate or comptroller, in which more than two candidates  
6 appear on the ballot for the same office, shall be conducted by instant  
7 run-off voting.

8 2. For the purposes of this section, the term "instant run-off voting"  
9 means an election in which voters may rank up to five candidates in  
10 order of preference, first, second and so on, and in which tabulation  
11 proceeds in up to two rounds as follows: If the candidate with the most  
12 votes receives a vote total less than fifty percent plus one vote, the  
13 two candidates with the most votes proceed to a second round of ballot-  
14 counting. In such second round, each ballot is counted as a vote for  
15 whichever of the two advancing candidates is ranked higher by that  
16 voter. Any ballot that does not rank either of the two advancing candi-  
17 dates shall not be counted in the second round. The candidate with the  
18 most votes in the second round shall be declared the winner.

19 3. That portion of the ballot pertaining to elections conducted by  
20 instant run-off voting shall allow a voter to rank candidates in order  
21 of choice in a way that is clear and easy to understand and shall  
22 include the opportunity to rank no more than one write-in candidate. To  
23 the extent possible, ballots shall be designed so that a voter may mark

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 that voter's first choice in the same manner as for offices not elected  
2 by instant run-off voting.

3 4. Instructions on the ballot for elections conducted by instant run-  
4 off voting must conform substantially to the following specifications,  
5 subject to modification based on ballot design, usability testing and  
6 voting machines: "Vote for candidates by indicating your first-choice  
7 candidate and ranking additional candidates in order of preference.  
8 Indicate your first choice by indicating a number "1" beside a candi-  
9 date's name, your second choice by indicating a number "2" beside a  
10 candidate's name, your third choice by marking the number "3" beside a  
11 candidate's name and so on. You may choose to rank only one candidate,  
12 but ranking another candidate as a lower choice will not hurt your first  
13 choice. You may rank the same candidate more than once, but the addi-  
14 tional ranking does not help that candidate. Do not mark the same number  
15 beside more than one candidate. Do not skip numbers."

16 5. The board of elections, with the approval of the state board of  
17 elections, may provide for the use of mechanical, electronic or other  
18 devices for sorting and counting ballots and tabulating results and may  
19 modify the form of the ballots, and the method of sorting, counting, and  
20 invalidating ballots and the tabulating and recounting of votes with  
21 respect to offices elected by instant run-off voting, provided that any  
22 change made substantially conforms to this chapter.

23 § 2. Paragraph (c) of subdivision 2 of section 7-114 of the election  
24 law, as amended by chapter 234 of the laws of 1976, is amended to read  
25 as follows:

26 (c) On the front of the stub, above the perforated line at the top of  
27 the paper ballot shall be printed the same instructions as on the gener-  
28 al election ballot, and additional instructions, if any, required under  
29 section 6-162 of this chapter.

30 § 3. This act shall take effect January 1, 2021.