Alaska

State Rank: 33
Overall Score: MEDIUM

Index 1: Voter Registration - Confidence level - LOW
Alaska closes voter registration 30 days before Election Day. The state offers automatic and online voter registration, but not same-day. Youth can preregister to vote close before they turn 18 years of age. Felony disenfranchisement continues until terms of parole or probation are complete. Alaska purges voters from lists after four years of nonvoting and no response to state notice of pending removal. There were zero purges conducted in 2020.

Index 2: Voter Identification - Confidence level - LOW
Alaska has a non-strict photo voter ID law. The state is a member of the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) which helps states improve accuracy of voter rolls. No laws were enacted in 2021 or 2022 to impose restrictions.

Index 3: Early Voting - Confidence level - MEDIUM
Alaska offers early in-person voting beginning 15 days before Election Day, ending the day before. Availability of weekend days and times are dependent on the location. No-excuse required absentee voting is available.

Index 4: Safe Voting - Confidence level - MEDIUM
Alaska now has no-excuse absentee ballot options in response to the pandemic, but did not codify the availability of drop boxes or proactive mailing of applications or ballots. Drop-off sites are limited and there is no prepaid postage. The state offers an online portal for absentee ballot applications and ballots, allows applications to be submitted as well as ballots received and submitted by fax, provides accessible electronic absentee ballots to voters with disabilities, and places no restrictions on who can return an absentee ballot for a voter in need.
Index 5: Ballot Acceptance - Confidence level - MEDIUM
Alaska had a moderate percentage of mail-in ballots returned in 2020, with a low rejection rate. There is a statewide ballot tracking program, but it is not strong nor statutorily required. The state does allow election administrators to preprocess returned ballots. It does not have a signature verification program nor provide a codified process for voters to correct for ballot discrepancies. An attesting signature is required on the return envelope by a witness older than 18 or an official authorized to administer oaths. Absentee ballots must be received within 10 days after an election if postmarked on or before Election Day.

Index 6: Logistical Barriers in Voting - Confidence level - MEDIUM
Alaska allows employees to take paid leave to vote for as much time as needed. For voter with disability or mobility issues, the state provides limited quality accessible voting machine options and hand delivery of ballots to those ill or homebound and unable to access a poll site in person. Alaska had a low ratio of poll workers to polling sites in 2020 and was among the bottom third of states that invested in the 2020 election to improve processes while being cost effective. No laws were passed in 2021 to improve or restrict voter access to the polls.

Index 7: Equipment, Security, and Auditing - Confidence level - HIGH
Alaska has a statewide verified paper audit trail. The state uses a combination of hand marked paper ballots and electronic voting machines. Alaska tests the equipment according to federal accreditation. Its election security systems received high overall ratings in 2018. The state uses traditional audit methods to double-check for machine recording errors before ballots are counted and during the statutorily required post-election period.
Index 8: Independent Election Administration - Confidence level - LOW
Although Alaska has established the constitutional right to a secret ballot, it does not prohibit election interference by the legislature. No laws were passed in 2021 on this topic, but legislation pending in early 2022 sought to usurp the role of state election officials; shift election authority; prohibit private funding of election administration; and increase the reporting, investigation, and prosecution of election crimes. None of the bills passed before the 2022 legislative session ended.

Index 9: External Interference in Voting - Confidence Level - MEDIUM
Public opinion surveys showed that Alaska voters had no trust in the 2020 election news coverage, while political scientists gave the state low media integrity ratings. State law requires that all poll workers be trained. The state has good campaign finance disclosure laws.

Index 10: The Role of Government and Politics – No rating given, informational only
Alaska is one of two states, along with Virginia, that has a split legislature and Republican Governor. It has a Republican triplex – the governor, attorney general, and secretary of state are from the same political party. Based on the last two presidential elections, Alaska is a solidly Republican-leaning state, with an average GOP voting margin of 12.4% compared to the national average Democratic voting margin of 3%. According to the 2020 U.S. Census, the state’s population grew by 3.3% compared to the national average of 7.4%. Alaska is as racially diverse as the country as a whole. Also, the state has the 2nd lowest median age at 34. Alaska has the highest percentage of Native Americans of any state at 14.8%. With the U.S. Census results, the state will neither gain nor lose any representatives in Congress.