



New Jersey 2021 General Election Results

On Tuesday, November 2, 2021, the race for New Jersey's next Governor is still too close to call with numbers shifting hourly to now about 15,000 votes currently dividing incumbent Governor Phil Murphy and Republican and former Assemblyman Jack Ciattarelli. Murphy holds the lead, but there are early in-person, vote-by-mail and provisional ballots still to be counted in several districts. The new gubernatorial term begins on January 16, 2022. In addition to the Governor, all 120 seats in the Legislature were up for election. The Democrats retained control of both houses, however, there are a few races that still remain close. As a result, stay tuned for continued updates and changes to the results reported here.

Currently, the Democrats hold significant majorities of 25-14 in the Senate and 52-28 in the Assembly. In the wake of Tuesday's election, Republicans appear to have picked up at least one seat in the Senate (in District 8) and possibly between six and eight seats in the Assembly (Districts 2, 11, 16), so we could see the Democratic majorities in both houses slip beyond 24-16 in the Senate and 44-36 in the Assembly. Click [here](#) for biographies of the new legislators thus far.

The lame duck session will now start and continue through the new session beginning on January 11, 2022. Leadership in both houses is expected to be decided in the coming days with Senator Loretta Weinberg retiring at the end of this term, Assembly Minority Leader Jon Bramnick moving up to the Senate and Senator Tom Kean leaving the Legislature to run for Congress. It is anticipated that Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin and Majority Leader Lou Greenwald will retain their leadership posts. It had previously been announced that Senate President Steve Sweeney would be joined by Senator Teresa Ruiz as Senate Majority and that the Senate Minority Leader will be Senator Steve Oroho. The Assembly Minority leadership spot is up in the air possibly between Nancy Munoz, John DiMaio and Brian Bergen.

Following were the most hotly contested races:

- Second District (part of Atlantic County) Due to the departure of Republican Senator Chris Brown, former Republican Assemblyman **Vince Polistina** defeated incumbent Democrat Assemblyman Vince Mazzeo for

the Senate seat by a 52 to 48% margin. Republicans **Don Guardian**, former Mayor of Atlantic City, and attorney **Claire Swift** defeated Democratic Assemblyman John Armato and Caren Fitzpatrick by 27 to 26 to 24 to 23% margins.

- Third District (parts of Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem Counties) In an extremely close race, Senate President Steve Sweeney faced a challenge by conservative Republican and trucker Edward Durr. Incumbent Democrats John Burzichelli and Adam Taliaferro are trailing their Republican challengers Beth Sawyer and Bethanne McCarthy Patrick by about 2,000-3,000 votes. The results of these races remain uncertain.
- Eighth District (parts of Atlantic, Burlington and Camden Counties) Democratic Senator Dawn Addiego was defeated by Republican **Assemblywoman Jean Stanfield** by 52 to 48% margin. Addiego's running-mates Allison Eckel and Mark Natale were defeated by the Republicans Hammonton Councilman **Michael Torrissi, Jr.** and Lumberton Township Administrator **Brandon Umba**.
- Eleventh District (part of Monmouth County) In another close race, incumbent Democrat Senator Vin Gopal is narrowly trailing his Republican challenger financial services executive Lori Annetta by 490 votes. Gopal's Assembly counterparts Assemblywoman Joann Downey and Eric Houghtaling are also down by over 3,100 votes in this challenge by Republican nutrition coach/fitness professional **Marilyn Piperno** and Shrewsbury Borough Councilwomen **Kimberly Eulner**.
- Sixteenth District (parts of Mercer, Hunterdon, Middlesex and Somerset Counties) With the retirement of Republican Senator Kip Bateman, this open seat saw Democrat Assemblyman Andrew Zwicker slightly trailing the Republican challenger former Congressman Mike Pappas by about 1,500-1,800 votes. Incumbent Democratic Assemblyman Roy Freiman and his running-mate Sadaf Jaffer appear to have been defeated by Republicans **Vincent Panico** and **Joseph Lukac** by a 26 to 24 to 23% margin where almost 2,000 votes separate the Republicans from the Democrats.

Although not competitive races, the following changes will also take place in the NJ Legislature:

- Thirteenth District (part of Monmouth County) Republican **Vicky Flynn** will take over a seat now held by Republican Assemblywoman Serena DiMaso.
- Twentieth District (part of Union County) Democrat and Reverenced **Reginald Atkins** will replace former Assemblyman Jamel Holly, who lost in his June primary bid for Senate against incumbent State Senator Joe Cryan. Cryan then ran unopposed in this election to retain his Senate seat.
- Twenty-first District (part of Morris, Somerset and Union Counties) Incumbent Republican Assemblyman John Bramnick defeated his Democratic challenger Joseph Signorello to serve in the Senate seat currently held by Senate Minority Leader Tom Kean. Bramnick will be joined by his running mates Republican Assemblywoman Nancy Munoz and Republican **Michele Matsikoudis**, who defeated Democrats

Elizabeth Graner and Anjali Mehrotra.

- Twenty-Sixth District (part of Essex, Morris and Passaic Counties) Incumbent Jay Webber will be joined by his Republican running-mate IBEW Local 102 electrician **Christian Barranco** in the seat currently held by Assemblywoman Betty Lou DeCroce.
- Thirty First District (part of Hudson County) Democrat and International Longshoreman's Association member **William Sampson** will become the new Assemblyman in this district to replace Assemblyman Nicholas Chiavaroltti.
- Thirty-Seventh District (part of Bergen County) Democrat incumbent Assemblyman Gordon Johnson defeated his Republican challenger to take the Senate seat vacated by the retirement of Senate Majority Leader Loretta Weinberg. Johnson will be joined by his running-mates **Shama Haider** and **Ellen Park**, with the primary loss of Assemblywoman Valerie Vainieri Huttle.

Voters also split on two state-wide ballot questions. One to permit wagering, through casinos and current or former horse racetracks, on all college sport or athletic events which lost by a 43 to 57% margin. The other question to permit all groups that are allowed to conduct bingo or raffles to use the net proceeds from those games to support their groups was approved by a 64 to 36% margin.

There were several local races of note, including Jersey City Mayor Steve Fulop who won a third term against political newcomer Lewis Spears. Atlantic City Mayor Marty Small, Sr. defeated Republican Thomas Forkin, a former Atlantic City Democratic municipal chairman. Edison Councilman Sam Joshi defeated Republican Keith Hahn, a former Democratic municipal chairman and Edison police officer.

At the county level, Republicans picked up County Commissioner seats in Atlantic, Gloucester and Somerset Counties. The Democrats won a surrogate seat in Burlington County and retained full control of all county seats in Bergen County.

Practice:

Governmental Affairs