

## NASS Survey: State Electoral College Ceremony Procedures

*This information is based on 25 state responses to a June 2008 NASS survey regarding Electoral College ceremonies.*

### State Overview of State Electoral College Ceremony Procedures

Arizona	The Electoral College ceremony consists of a welcome by the Secretary of State, opening remarks by the Governor, the oath of office, voting by the electors, affixing of the seals, and adjournment.
Arkansas	The State of Arkansas convenes the Presidential electors in the State Capitol. The Secretary of State presides over a brief ceremony in which the names of the electors are read as certified to the SOS. <del>The Chief Justice of the Arkansas Supreme Court administers an Oath of Office for the electors, after</del> which the electors nominate and vote upon a Chairperson and Secretary for the meeting. The Secretary proceeds to distribute ballots to the electors, who each cast one ballot for President of the United States and one ballot for Vice-President of the United States. After the ballots are cast, the chairperson reads aloud each vote in the presence of the Secretary of State. The Chairperson and Secretary of the electors proceed to certify the results of the vote to the Secretary of State. The Secretary requests electors to sign six (the number of Arkansas's electors) duplicate originals of the certification of the vote for both President and Vice-President. The meeting then concludes. The Secretary of State hosts a reception after the proceedings for the Presidential electors and special guests. Photos of the ceremony are distributed after the event compliments of the Secretary of State.
Colorado	In Colorado, the Secretary of State conducts the official meeting of presidential electors in the Governor's office. Beyond the basic statutory process of qualifying the electors, administering oaths, <del>and casting ballots, there has not been any consistent custom regarding the ceremonies.</del>
Georgia	<b>1-4-304. Presidential electors. (1)</b> The presidential electors shall convene at the capital of the state, in the office of the governor at the capitol building, on the first Monday after the second Wednesday in the first December following their election at the hour of 12 noon and take the oath required by law for presidential electors. If any vacancy occurs in the office of a presidential elector because of death, refusal to act, absence, or other cause, the presidential electors present shall immediately proceed to fill the vacancy in the electoral college. When all vacancies have been filled, the presidential electors shall proceed to perform the duties required of them by the constitution and laws of the United States. The vote for president and vice president shall be taken by open ballot. <b>(2)</b> The secretary of state shall give notice in writing to each of the presidential electors of the time and place of the meeting at least ten days prior to the meeting. <b>(3)</b> The secretary of state shall provide the presidential electors with the necessary blanks, forms, certificates, or other papers or documents required to enable them to properly perform their duties. <b>(4)</b> If desired, the presidential electors may have the advice of the attorney general of the state in regard to their official duties. <b>(5)</b> Each presidential elector shall vote for the presidential candidate and, by separate ballot, vice-presidential candidate who received the highest number of votes at the preceding general election in this state.
	In Georgia, the law requires that the electors meet in the Senate Chamber of the state capitol at the designated time. Traditionally, there has been a signing ceremony including pictures with the Governor, <del>but it depends on the wishes of the Governor serving at that time.</del>

Illinois	In general, proceedings can be in any format that the state chooses, whether formal or informal. Proceedings are open to the public and held in the Capitol building with the electors. School groups or audience that wishes to attend are invited. Specific letterhead is used and travel costs are paid for the electors. Some of this is delineated in statute and some in administrative code rule. Other practices are just Index procedures.
Indiana	Four years ago, the Office of Secretary of State worked with the state party organization of the winning candidate (Indiana is a winner takes all state) to plan the event. The Office reserved the location, developed an agenda, and brought in dignitaries to participate in the event (invocation, benediction, National Anthem, Pledge of Allegiance, Oath's, etc.). Secretary of State Rokita presided over the event in his official capacities as Chief Election Official performing the ceremonial duties
Iowa	Ceremony held in Governor's Office.
Kentucky	The Kentucky Secretary of State conducts an official ceremony for electors and held in the Supreme Court. The program is as follows: Meeting of Electors called to order by the Secretary of State; Invocation; Musical Selection; Greetings; History of Electoral College; Roll Call of Electors; Administration of Oath to Electors (given by Chief Justice of KY Supreme Ct.); Nomination and Election of Permanent Chairman & Secretary; Presentation of Ballots; Voting; Preparation of documents for Electors
Louisiana	Louisiana has an official ceremony held at the State Capitol in Baton Rouge, LA, which according to law will be December 15, 2008. The Office works with the Governor's office. The Secretary of State's office takes care of all official documents and makes sure they are mailed out in a timely manner.
Maine	In Maine, the presidential electors who are chosen as a result of the general election will meet in the chamber of the Maine House of Representatives. At that time, they will cast their Electoral College votes for President and Vice President of the United States. A separate ballot is used to cast a vote for each office.
Maryland	The ceremony often depends on the person that is elected as Chairman and how much that individual takes charge of the ceremony and the remarks they make during the ceremony. It also depends on the involvement of individuals like the Governor, Secretary of State, Party Chairmen - if they become involved, the level of media coverage will most likely increase.
Missouri	Traditionally, Missouri electors have met in the State Capitol, with a representative of the Governor's office conducting the meeting, to cast votes for President and Vice President. Votes are counted and winners announced at this unofficial gathering.
New Hampshire	In New Hampshire, there is a very formal ceremony when the electoral college members cast their votes. The ceremony is public and is held in the Executive Council chambers. Secretary of State Gardner runs the meeting. Official minutes are kept.
New Jersey	The State of New Jersey does have an official ceremony when the electors cast their votes at the electoral college. The ceremony consists of Welcoming Remarks by the Secretary of State. The Presentation of the Colors and the National Anthem is conducted by the State Police. The Invocation is done by i.e., Reverend, Rabbi. The Governor announces the Election Results. The Director of the Division of Elections conducts the Election of the Members of the Electoral College. The Benediction is done by i.e., Reverend, Rabbit.
New Mexico	New Mexico has no official ceremony when electors cast their votes towards the electoral college.
New York	On the Monday following the second Wednesday in December, New York has a ceremony in the Senate Chambers at 12:00 noon, inviting all 31 delegates to cast their vote for the candidate who won New York State. It is a historic ceremony in which the Secretary of State is the presiding host.

Nevada	Electors meet at 2:00 p.m in the old Supreme Court chambers. Electors record votes on Certificates of Vote which are attached to the remaining original Certificates of Ascertainment. Electors sign, seal and certify the packages of electoral votes.
North Carolina	Electors are gathered for a briefing the evening before. The event is held in the historical House chamber, seating is assigned with desk tents for the electors, winning party chair and a few others. The Congressional delegation and the entire General Assembly are invited. The presentation opens with the colors, pledge, prayer and a musical selection. The Secretary of State calls the group to order, conducts introductions, explains the process and then conducts the election for the Chair/President of the Electoral College. This is done in the advance meeting the night before and re-voted that morning. The chair who was prepared conducts the election of the remaining officers-a teller and maybe an assistant chair. The group will have prearranged the nomination process and do the short speeches, etc for the winner. Voting is done by paper ballot. The ballots are collected, counted and announced. The official paperwork for transmittal is completed and we adjourn. There is a small appropriation every four years to do this.
North Dakota	The Governor calls the meeting to order and appoints the Secretary of State as Secretary for the meeting. The Governor issues instructions to the Secretary to call the roll, administer the oaths of office, distribute the Presidential and Vice Presidential ballots, and canvass the votes. Upon completion of the canvass, the Secretary presents the abstract to the Governor for inspection. The Governor announces the results of the canvass and offers the abstract to the Electors for their inspection and confirmation of the results. The Governor instructs the Electors to sign the Certificates of Votes and instructs the Secretary to forward the Certificates of Votes Cast envelopes at such time and to such persons as has been directed by the Archivist of the United States. For the purpose of the historical record of the State of North Dakota, the Governor charges the Secretary with the responsibility of securing the ballots, official documents, agenda, and all related papers used in conducting the meeting of the Presidential Electors. The Secretary provides Electors with an invitation from the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies to attend the Presidential Swearing-In Ceremony. The Secretary reminds the Electors to submit their reimbursement forms to the Secretary. The Governor makes closing comments and adjourns the meeting.
Ohio	The date is set by law – the college must meet on the first Monday after the second Tuesday in December – December 15, 2008, at noon. The meeting must be held in the state capitol (meaning the actual statehouse building) with the governor and secretary of state present. Relevant sections of the Ohio Revised Code concerning the electoral college are found in sections 3505.39 (meeting of state's presidential electors) and 3513.111 (nominating candidates for election as presidential electors.) The major parties must identify their presidential electors to the Office of Secretary of State no later than September 30, 2008. Independent and write-in candidates for president and VP must name their presidential electors when they file their petitions. The only restriction on presidential electors in the US Constitution is that they cannot be federal employees or members of Congress.
Oregon	Oregon does a ceremony that takes about 15 min. The electors for the winning party gather in the state House. The Secretary calls it all to order, they vote by signing the official documents, and then the Secretary announces the outcome.
Pennsylvania	Information about Pennsylvania's Electoral College ceremony can be found at: <a href="http://www.dos.state.pa.us/elections/cwp/view.asp?a=1315&amp;q=447065&amp;electionsNav= ">http://www.dos.state.pa.us/elections/cwp/view.asp?a=1315&amp;q=447065&amp;electionsNav= </a>
Rhode Island	The State of RI in the past has always had a ceremony at the State House for the electoral college. The National Guard honor guard leads the procession into the Governors state room. In the procession are the Governor, Secretary of state, US District Court Judge, RI Post Master, Other elected officials that are present, commissioners from the board of elections and the 4 electors. The Governor opens up the college. Turns it over to the Secretary of State who then advises the electors to elect a president of the college. The president then calls for an election of a secretary. Then the votes are cast and the process is pretty much done. The certificates are then delivered to the post master who then sends them to DC. The ceremony is very nice.

South Carolina	Information about how the Electoral College works in South Carolina is available at the following link: <a href="http://www.scvotes.org/2007/10/10/the_electoral_college_in_south_carolina">http://www.scvotes.org/2007/10/10/the_electoral_college_in_south_carolina</a> .
South Dakota	In South Dakota, the electors meet in the governor's office and there is a very short signing ceremony. Usually attended by the electors, representatives from my office, and some media.