

HB 1604-FN - AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE

11Mar2026... 0676h

2026 SESSION

26-3195
08/07

HOUSE BILL

1604-FN

AN ACT requiring suitable public facilities such as schools and town halls be made available as polling places upon request by local election officials.

SPONSORS: Rep. Guzofski, Rock. 1; Rep. Berry, Hills. 44; Rep. Qualey, Ches. 18; Rep. See, Merr. 26; Rep. Wherry, Hills. 13; Rep. Burnham, Straf. 2; Rep. Muirhead, Graf. 12

COMMITTEE: Election Law

ANALYSIS

This bill requires suitable public facilities such as schools and town halls be made available as polling places upon request by local election officials.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough.]~~
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Six

AN ACT requiring suitable public facilities such as schools and town halls be made available as polling places upon request by local election officials.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 New Section; Use of Public Buildings as Polling Places. Amend RSA 658 by inserting after
2 section 9-a the following new section:

3 658:9-b Use of Public Buildings as Polling Places.

4 I. Upon request by the selectmen of a town or the ward officers of a city ward, any town-,
5 city-, or school-owned or -operated facility within the town or ward, including any public schools,
6 town halls, fire stations, or other municipal, school district, or charter school property, that is of
7 sufficient size and accessibility to meet the requirements of RSA 658:9, shall be made available for
8 use as a polling place for all elections, including state, federal, and municipal elections.

9 II. When designated as a polling place, such facility shall be reserved as necessary to ensure
10 the conduct of the election and the free and convenient access of voters, election officials, and
11 equipment, while permitting the continuation of normal governmental or educational operations,
12 including emergency response and public safety services.

13 III. The municipality shall be responsible for reasonable costs directly related to such use,
14 including custodial services, utilities, and security, unless otherwise agreed by the parties.

15 2 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.

HB 1604-FN- FISCAL NOTE
AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE (AMENDMENT #2026-0676h)

AN ACT requiring suitable public facilities such as schools and town halls be made available as polling places upon request by local election officials.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Estimated Political Subdivision Impact				
	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
County Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
County Expenditures	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Local Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Local Expenditures	\$0	Indeterminable Increase more than \$10,000 to \$100,000 or less		

METHODOLOGY:

This bill requires any suitable town, city, or school owned/operated facility within the town or ward, such as public schools, town halls, fire stations, or other municipal or, school district, or charter school property, be made available as polling places upon request by the selectmen of a town or the ward officers of a city ward. The municipality would be responsible for reasonable costs associated with custodial services, utilities, and security unless otherwise agreed upon by the relevant parties involved.

The New Hampshire Municipal Association states adding an additional polling location could increase local expenditures by approximately \$10,000 to \$100,000, primarily for staffing and essential services. Furthermore, legal expenses may arise if disputes occur between facility and municipal officials regarding what constitutes reasonable costs.

It is assumed that any fiscal impact would occur after FY 2026.

AGENCIES CONTACTED:

New Hampshire Municipal Association