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**264** BIDEN

**PRESIDENT**

TRUMP **214**



73 523 773 votes (51%) 270 electoral votes to win 69 635 907 votes (48%) Source: AP

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POLITICS | ELECTION 2020

# A Guide to Recount Rules in Competitive Election 2020 States

Several states have close vote margins between President Trump and Joe Biden, and each has its own rules for when a recount happens



Ballots were still being processed Thursday at the Clark County Election Department in North Las Vegas.

PHOTO: JOE BUGLEWICZ/BLOOMBERG NEWS

By [Gabriel T. Rubin](#)

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President Trump and former Vice President Joe Biden are locked into tight contests in more than a half-dozen battleground states, making it likely that one campaign or the other will request a recount once results are fully tabulated.

Mr. Trump's campaign has said it will request a recount in Wisconsin, where unofficial totals show him trailing by around 20,000 votes and where the Associated Press has called the race for Mr. Biden. Mr. Biden's margin there is around 0.6 percentage point, within the one-point margin necessary for a campaign to request a recount.

Rules for recounts vary by state. Here is a breakdown of those procedures in the most competitive contests.

## Arizona

Campaigns can't request a recount, they can only be triggered automatically when there is a margin of less than or equal to 0.1 percentage point.

## Georgia

Razor-thin margins in this state make a recount highly likely. Candidates can request a recount if the margin is within 0.5 point. The request has to happen within two business days after the state certifies the election results. The certification deadline is Nov. 17.

## Michigan

A recount situation is unlikely here because state law stipulates that automatic recounts only occur if there are less than 2,000 votes separating candidates. As of Thursday afternoon, Mr. Biden led by around 150,000 votes.

## **Nevada**

Campaigns can request a recount regardless of vote margin within three days of the state canvass, which must be completed within six “working days” of the election. The recount must be completed within 10 days of the request. The campaign requesting the recount must pay for it.

## **North Carolina**

Campaigns can request a recount if a race has a margin of 0.5% or less, and it must be requested by noon of the second business day after the state canvass, which happens three weeks after the election. A recount must be completed within approximately five days of the request, though that is subject to the decision of the State Board of Elections.

## **Pennsylvania**

There are mandatory recounts for any race that has a margin of 0.5% or less that must be completed within three weeks of an election. Campaigns can also request recounts, no matter the margin, within five days of canvass completion.

## **Wisconsin**

Vote margins must be within 1 percentage point for a campaign to request a recount. There are no automatic recounts in the state, and the campaign that requests it must pay for it. It must be completed within 13 days of the formal recount order. The request must be submitted within three days of the state’s official county canvass.