



Maricopa County Recorder's Office

QUARTERLY REPORT

July 1 - September 30, 2021

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Letter from the Recorder

Dear Maricopa County:

Another election in the books. Our third election of 2021. This time, ballots went out to roughly half the county's eligible voting population, and 308,268 people cast ballots. The results of the jurisdictional elections are available here: [Results.Maricopa.Vote](#)

You probably didn't hear about the administration of this election. *The Arizona Republic* only wrote about the issues on the ballot and the results. *The Arizona Capitol Times* – the publication for the minutiae of Arizona politics – didn't say anything about the election in the days following Election Day. Ditto local radio and news stations.

That's because the election administration was smooth, uneventful, and – dare I say it?! – boring.

That hasn't always been the case.

Credit the wonderful teams we've assembled at the Recorder's Office and Elections Department. This hardworking team pulled off this election – which had more voters than most jurisdictions will ever face, even during presidential elections – while also dealing with challenges and demands never before faced in election administration. I'm grateful and proud to call them colleagues.

I'm also grateful for:

- The approximately 250 temporary workers who joined our team for this election. These people are regular Arizonans – your neighbors! – who take up the call every so often to work voting locations, verify signatures, process ballots, organize equipment, set up locations, etc. They make elections work and are every bit as much a part of the team.
- The participating towns, cities, and school districts who trusted us to run their elections (the Elections Department is a contractor for these elections). Thank you. Special thanks to County Superintendent Steve Watson.
- The Maricopa County Republican Party, the Maricopa County Democratic Party, and the Maricopa County Libertarian Party, who together provided over 40 appointed party observers -- more than ever before provided for a jurisdictional election!
- My elected colleagues who also have a hand in the County Elections Department: Chairman Jack Sellers, Vice-Chairman Bill Gates, Supervisor Steve Chucuri, Supervisor Clint Hickman, and Supervisor Steve Gallardo. All five are committed to our elections; all five are committed to effective government, and all five are great colleagues.
- Others in the Maricopa County family who played a role: Sheriff Paul Penzone, whose office has assisted in countless ways; County Attorney Allister Adel, whose office has provided hundreds of hours of legal advice; Assessor Eddie Cook who has invested

significant time in learning about the county's elections and advocating on behalf of the team, and Treasurer John Allen who has offered much-appreciated wisdom on the nuances of Arizona political systems.

I'm pleased with our success in a major election. But this was, in some senses, the preseason. 2022 will pose new demands and challenges, and that's why we're already working on revamping our voter registration database, rebuilding our website, improving voter information, recruiting and training temporary election workers, finding voting centers, and proposing election integrity improvements.

I promise we'll continue working very hard to achieve these outcomes.

Thank you.

Stephen

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen Richer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stephen
Maricopa County Recorder

P.S. I realize the third quarter ended over a month ago, but we waited until after the November jurisdictional election to send this update.

Recording Department

Between July 1, 2021 and September 30, 2021, the Office recorded 338,469 documents – a 2.96 percent decrease from the third quarter of 2020 (348,794 documents). The majority of documents are now recorded digitally – 92 percent through the third quarter of this year.

Documents associated with refinancing (Deeds of Trust and Deeds of Release) are still the driving force, and numbers remain historically high. We have seen heightened interest from the media in reference to institutional buyers as evidenced by public records requests.

In addition to recording all instruments authorized or required by law to be recorded for the public, the Office is required to create an index of the grantee and grantor names of each document. Currently, the team indexes on average 5,000 documents a day, with a 48-hour turnaround time for those documents to then be searchable by name on the Recorder's Office website.

For more statistics on recording, please see [Appendix A](#).

Voter Registration Department

The Voter Registration Department remains busy as large numbers of voters continue to move to Maricopa County and new housing developments are mapped into districts. Between July 1 and September 30, we received 36,402 new voter registrations.

Voters regularly make updates to their voter registration records such as partisan affiliation, addresses, and active early voting list (AEVL) status, some of which require processing by the voter registration team. For example, between July 1 and September 30, we received 18,630 party changes.

Additionally, this quarter the Voter Registration Department reviewed petition sheets for two referendums:

- [Referendum R-06-2021](#) sought to challenge [Senate Bill 1783](#), a bill from this past legislative session that created a new classification of income (“small business income”) and established new income tax brackets and rates for trusts and estates. The referendum required 118,823 signatures from valid voters. The referendum’s committee (“Invest in Arizona”) submitted 123,531 signatures to the Secretary of State. As required by law, the Secretary of State sent sample files to each county for validity checks. The Voter Registration Department reviewed 2,985 signatures and found 2,533 to be from qualified electors and deemed 452 signatures invalid. Based on this report, and the reports of other counties, the [Secretary of State found that Invest in Arizona did not submit a sufficient number of valid signatures](#) to challenge Senate Bill 1783.
- [Referendum R-03-2021](#) seeks to challenge parts of [Senate Bill 1828](#) that created “new income tax brackets and rates that apply when state general fund revenue exceeds certain amounts.” The committee (also “Invest in Arizona”) submitted approximately double the number of valid signatures required (118,823). The Voter Registration Department reviewed 6,224 signatures and found 4,702 to be valid and 1,522 signatures invalid. The Secretary of State has not yet stated if the referendum cleared the minimum threshold.

For more voter registration statistics, see [Appendix B](#).

Elections Department

Reprecincting and Redistricting

While the [Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission](#) is responsible for redrawing Congressional and Legislative district lines every 10 years after the U.S. Census is released, Maricopa County is responsible for updating voting precincts, Justice Court precincts (boundaries each with an elected Justice of the Peace and Constable), and the Board of Supervisor district boundaries. Voting precincts are the geographic building blocks election administrators use to determine ballot content, prepare for elections, and report election results. The Recorder's Office has a talented team of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) experts that have stayed on top of the changes to the census and state laws to ensure Maricopa County provides proposed maps built with data-driven decisions and methodology.

This quarter, the Elections Department, Justice Courts, and Board of Supervisors updated and approved the voting precincts and Justice Court precinct lines. This process included five public meetings that solicited feedback from the community.

All of the proposed changes, full maps, methodology, and recordings of the public meetings can be found at [Reprecincting.Maricopa.Vote](#).

November 2021 Election

Final results are posted for the 2021 November Jurisdictional Elections at [Results.Maricopa.Vote](#). Results show 308,268 voters cast a ballot, which is 21.86 percent of total eligible voters. Voters can track their ballots online at [BeBallotReady.Vote](#).

As a reminder, state law allows jurisdictions to hold ballot-by-mail elections if the jurisdictions so choose (they did), so all eligible voters received a ballot in the mail – even those not on the Active Early Voting List.

The November 2 Jurisdictional Election by the numbers:

- 25 ballot replacement centers served over 2,300 voters in this election. Even in all ballot-by-mail elections, state law requires each jurisdiction to provide a ballot replacement center within its boundaries.
- We are exceptionally grateful to the 148 poll workers and 111 central board workers who supported this election.
- Nearly 88% of voters returned their ballot via the United States Postal Service. Approximately 36,400 (11.8%) of ballots were dropped off at ballot drop-boxes.
- 21 school districts and 4 cities participated in this election. Find the list of participating jurisdictions [here](#).
- The 21.86% turnout was slightly below average for odd-year jurisdictional elections (28% in Nov. 2019, 23.5% in Nov. 2017 and 23.8% in Nov. 2015).
- Over 40 appointees from Maricopa County political parties observed the County's election processes throughout the entire election. We appreciate their contributions.

External Affairs Department

Deputy Registrar Program

Trainings and certifications for the Recorder’s Office Deputy Registrar program continued online and resumed in person this quarter. As of September 30, the Office had 818 Deputy Registrars, up from 737 at the end of 2020. During the third quarter, the Office held three new Deputy Registrar classes and certified 30 new Deputy Registrars. The Office also presented three continuing education courses covering topics such as “Updates from the 2021 Arizona Legislature” and “Top Voter Issues of 2020.” We are excited by the turnout for these classes and look forward to continuing the series in the fourth quarter. We greatly appreciate the volunteer efforts of our Deputy Registrars who share accurate information in their communities about voter registration and support elections functions.

Public Records Requests

During this third quarter, July 1 – September 30, the Office received 106 public records requests. Staff worked hard to complete these requests, and all but 6 of the 106 have been entirely resolved. See the breakdown here:

Extensive Research	43
Voter Data	21
Voter Information	42
Pending Form (to be suspended)	0

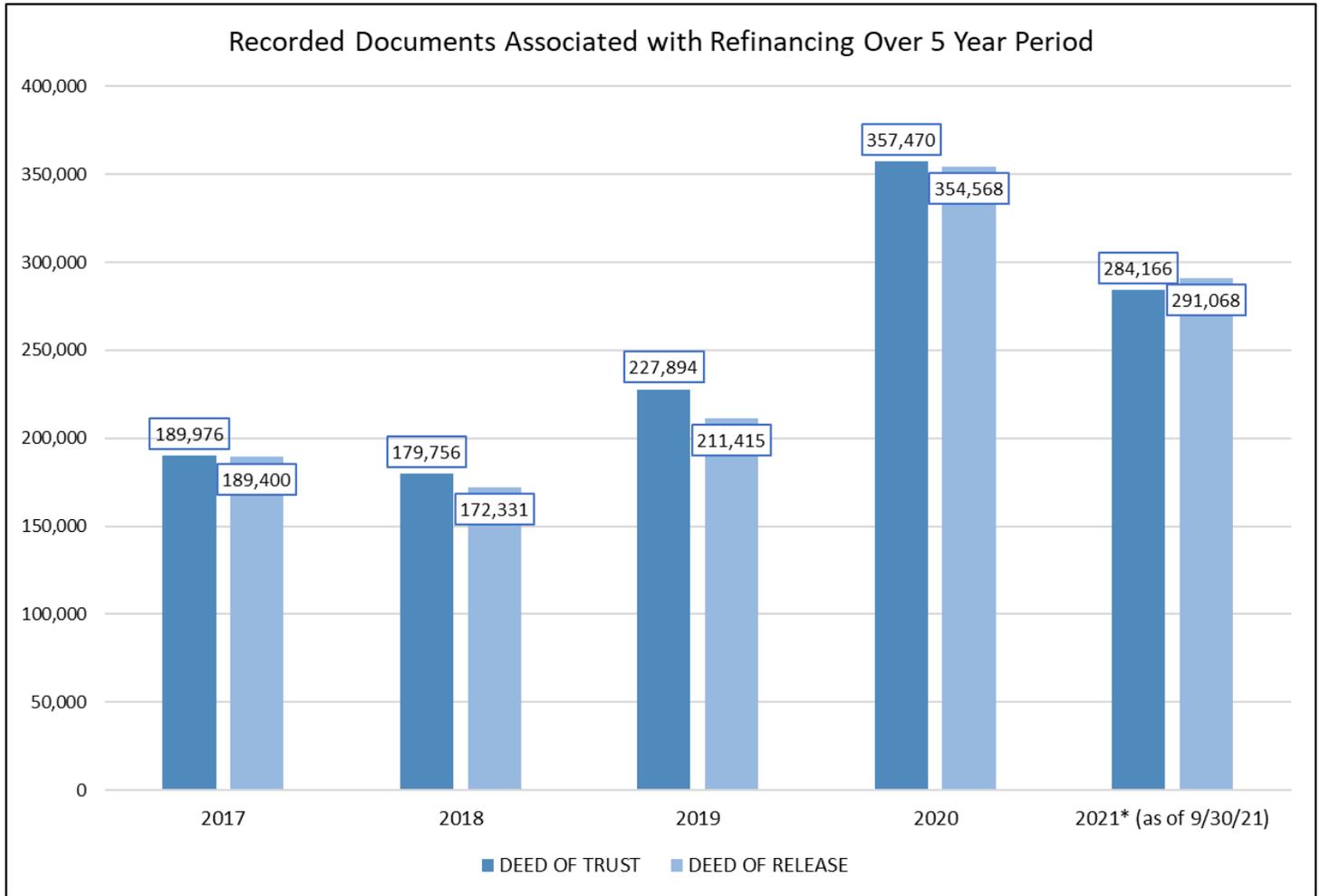
Contact Us

If you have any questions, please contact the team at voterinfo@risc.maricopa.gov.

Appendix A – Recording Services Statistics

Appendix A – Recording Services Statistics – Infographic

Documents Recorded in Maricopa County Associated with Refinancing 2017 through September 30, 2021



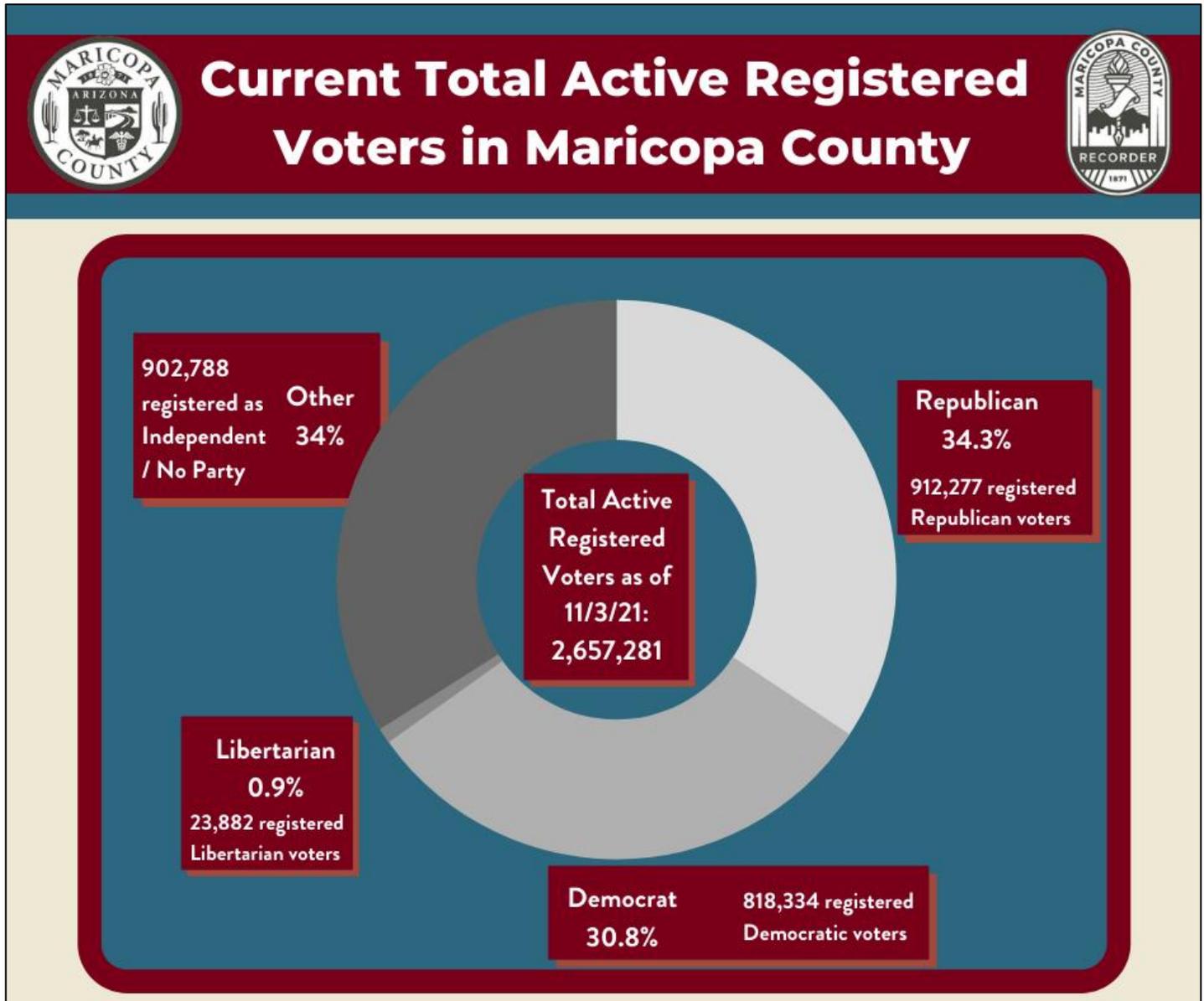
The Recording Services department accepts documents for the creation of a permanent public record. These documents are often real property related (ex. deeds, titles, liens) and include any encumbrances placed on real property. Approximately 92% of all documents are now recorded digitally through the Recorder’s Office online portal, though we also continue to serve customers in-person at our public counter in downtown Phoenix.

Appendix B – Voter Registration Figures

See Voter Registration totals updated in real time [on our website](#).

Infographic 1

Totals of active registered voters by party in Maricopa County as of November 3, 2021.

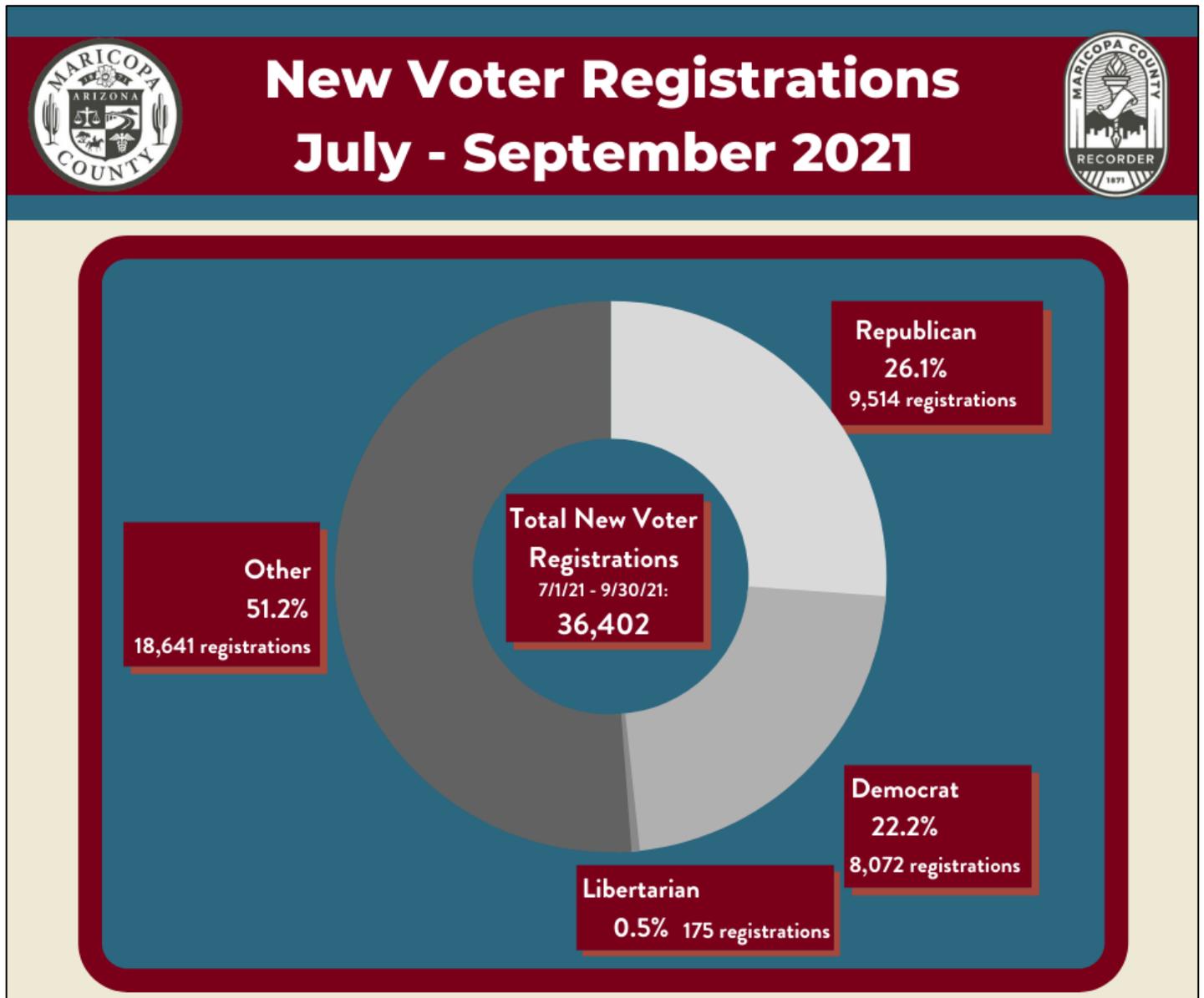


**Data retrieved November 3, 2021. Voter registration figures may fluctuate in real time due to ongoing voter list maintenance*

Appendix B – Voter Registration Figures

Infographic 2:

Newly registered voters by party in Maricopa County between July 1, 2021 – September 30, 2021.



**Data retrieved November 3, 2021. Voter registration figures may fluctuate in real time due to ongoing voter list maintenance*

Appendix B – Voter Registration Figures

Infographic 3:

Political Party Voter Registration changes in Maricopa County from July 1, 2021 – September 30, 2021.



**Data retrieved November 3, 2021. Voter registration figures may fluctuate in real time due to ongoing voter list maintenance*