Subject	Ranked Choice Voting
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Overview

This bill provides certain local governments the option to adopt ranked choice voting for the election of local offices. A ranked choice voting election permits voters to rank a number of candidates for office in order of preference, and the election results are tabulated in a series of rounds, eliminating candidates based on the strength of their rankings by voters, until the candidate(s) to be elected have received an established threshold of votes sufficient for election.

Summary

Section	Description
1	**Application.** Adds a cross-reference to ranked choice voting, to an existing law governing ballot preparation.
2	**Ranked choice voting election.** Adds a reference to ranked choice voting elections in an existing law governing the method of counting votes.
3	**Exception; certain nonpartisan candidate.** Provides that candidates in a nonpartisan ranked choice voting election must be omitted from the state and county primary election ballot.
4	**Applicability; authorized local adoption only.** Provides that the new chapter of statute enacted by this bill applies to all elections conducted using ranked choice voting, as authorized by law. All other provisions of law related to the conduct and administration of elections also apply to ranked choice voting elections, to the extent they are consistent with the provisions established in the bill.

Section	Description

5   **Definitions.**

Provides definitions for a number of terms that are used throughout the bill.

6   **Authorization for local adoption.**

Authorizes cities and school districts to adopt ranked choice voting as a method of voting for local offices, beginning January 1, 2025. The proposed author's amendment extends this authority to counties also.

Details regarding how ranked choice voting must be adopted within the jurisdiction are provided.

7   **Ballots in local ranked choice voting elections.**

Provides standards for ballot formatting, including a requirement that a ranked choice voting ballot permit a voter to rank at least three candidates for each office and provide for write-in candidates, that instructions be provided on the ballot, and that offices to be elected using ranked choice voting be clearly separated on the ballot from offices to be elected using another voting method.

The local election official is required to determine the ballot format after a voting mechanism has been selected.

8   **Local ranked choice voting tabulation center.**

Subd. 1. Tabulation of votes; generally. Requires one physical location be designated as the ranked choice voting tabulation center. The location must be accessible to the public for the purposes of observing the vote tabulation.

Subd. 2. Precinct tabulation. On election night, within each precinct, the election judges must record and publicly declare the number of first choice votes cast for each candidate in the precinct. All electronic voting data and ballots must then be securely transferred to the tabulation center.

Subd. 3. Notice of recess in count. At the ranked choice voting tabulation center, a recess in counting is permitted for meals or other necessary purposes. Notice of a recess must be posted; the content and locations for posting the notice are provided in the bill.

Subd. 4. Recording write-in votes. Establishes standards for processing and counting write-in votes.

Subd. 5. Ranked choice vote tabulation. Requires tabulation of votes cast, at a time set by the chief elections official, on a continual basis until preliminary results are determined for all races (subject to the provisions allowing for a recess).

Section	Description

9 **Tabulation of votes; single-seat local ranked choice voting elections.**

Establishes mathematical and procedural standards for tabulating ranked choice votes and determining the result when there is a single seat to be elected. These standards include the establishment of a threshold vote total required for a candidate to be elected, procedures for transferring a candidate's surplus votes to other continuing candidates based on ranking, elimination of candidates with insufficient votes to continue, and procedures when a voter skips a ranking on the ballot.

10 **Tabulation of votes; multiple-seat local ranked choice voting elections.**

Establishes mathematical and procedural standards for tabulating ranked choice votes and determining the result, when there are multiple seats to be elected from among a single set of candidates on the ballot. These standards include the establishment of a threshold vote total required for a candidate to be elected, procedures for transferring a candidate's surplus votes to other continuing candidates based on ranking, elimination of candidates with insufficient votes to continue, and procedures when a voter skips a ranking on the ballot.

11 **Local ranked choice voting elections; reporting results.**

Establishes standards for the vote total summary statements required to be produced within each precinct and by the ranked choice voting local election official.

12 **Local ranked choice election recounts.**

Establishes standards for a recount of a ranked choice voting election. A candidate defeated in the final round of tabulation may request a recount under the standards and procedures provided in current law and rule. Any candidate, regardless of the time of their elimination or the vote difference, may request a recount at the candidate's own expense, also subject to administrative rules governing recounts.

13 **Local ranked choice elections; postelection review.**

Establishes standards and procedures for postelection review of an election that is conducted by ranked choice voting. A postelection review is used to determine whether the voting tabulation system accurately recorded the results. The standards and procedures detailed in this section include the number and selection of precincts to be reviewed, and the standard for acceptable performance of the voting system.

14 **Rules; local option ranked choice voting.**

Authorizes the secretary of state to adopt rules to implement the ranked choice voting requirements and procedures established by this bill.

Section	Description

15   **Notice of filing dates.**

Requires the notice of candidate filing dates for a municipal election to include information on the method of voting to be used at the election.

16   **Required certification.**

Requires vendors of a voting system to obtain a test report from a voting system test lab demonstrating that the system is in compliance with federal voting systems guidelines.

17   **Municipalities.**

Authorizes municipalities to adopt the use of an electronic voting system that includes features for vote tabulation that have not been certified by the secretary of state, so long as those features have been tested by an independent testing authority accredited by the federal Election Assistance Commission and those features meet the municipality's needs for an election.

18   **Electronic voting systems; purchasing.**

Establishes minimum standards and functionality for all electronic voting systems purchased in the state, including a requirement that the system be capable of handling a ranked choice voting election.

19   **Testing of voting systems.**

Requires voting systems to be tested for accuracy in tabulating votes at a ranked choice voting election, when the system will be used for that purpose.

20   **When and where filed by committees.**

For purposes of campaign finance reporting, requires candidates in a jurisdiction where the local primary is eliminated due to the use of ranked choice voting to continue to file a report in the same manner as if the primary were being held.