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ELECTION ESSENTIALS
MONITOR TOP, HOT AND YOUR RACES

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Posted 8:38 a.m. ET, November 5
Labor Department says employers added 337,000 new jobs in October; unemployment rate rises to 5.5 percent.

BREAKING NEWS

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U.S. PRESIDENT / ELECTORAL VOTE COUNT

The president and vice president are elected by 538 Electoral College voters, one per senator and representative from each state, who usually cast a ballot for the candidate who wins the popular vote. In addition, the District of Columbia has three votes. A candidate must receive a majority of 270 votes to win the election.

PROJECTED ELECTOR COUNT

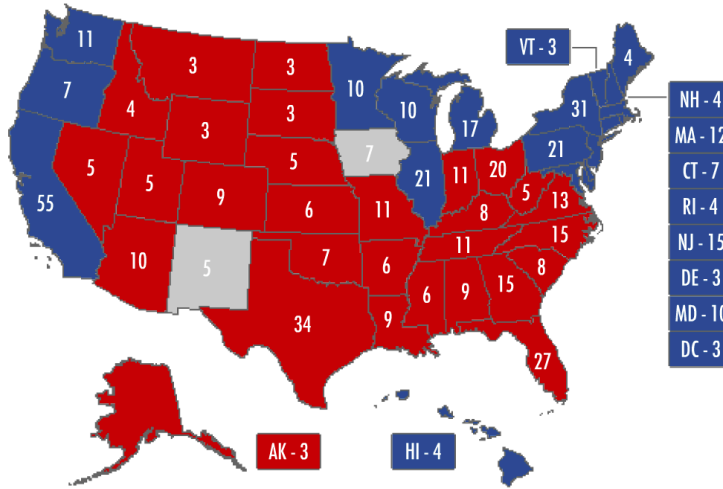
Use tabs to the right to navigate between maps

2004

2000

As of 2:00 p.m., CNN had not projected winners in New Mexico and Iowa.

TOTAL
538
BUSH
274
KERRY
252



SCHEDULE

NOVEMBER 2

- General election
- States send Certificates of Ascertainment - the list of electors - to the Federal Register through December 13.

DECEMBER 13

- Electors meet in each state to vote for president and vice president. Most meet at their respective state capitols.

DECEMBER 22

- By this date, votes must reach the president of the Senate and the archivist.

JANUARY 6

- Congress meets in joint session to count and announce the vote.

WHAT IF?

No candidate wins majority

- Newly elected House picks president from top three Electoral College vote-getters.
- Newly elected Senate chooses vice president from top two Electoral College vote-getters.
- **Timeline:** [Congressional intervention](#)

An elector bucks system

- In 26 states and Washington D.C., laws require electors to follow the popular vote.
- Some states threaten penalties for "faithless electors." No one has ever been prosecuted.
- **Details:** [Rules and regulations](#)



NOTE

- All Times Eastern Standard
- CNN will broadcast a projected winner only after an extensive review of data from a number of sources. [Details about CNN's projection process](#)
- * The poll closing countdown clock runs off the time on your computer. Your computer may not exactly match the official poll closing clock. To ensure a closer match, try synchronizing your clock to a network time server. [Technical help and advice](#)

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