



## What's Going On?

The Sullivan County Legislature is considering asking voters to determine whether all nine legislators should be elected every four years (which is the current process) or via staggered terms.

## What Are Staggered Terms?

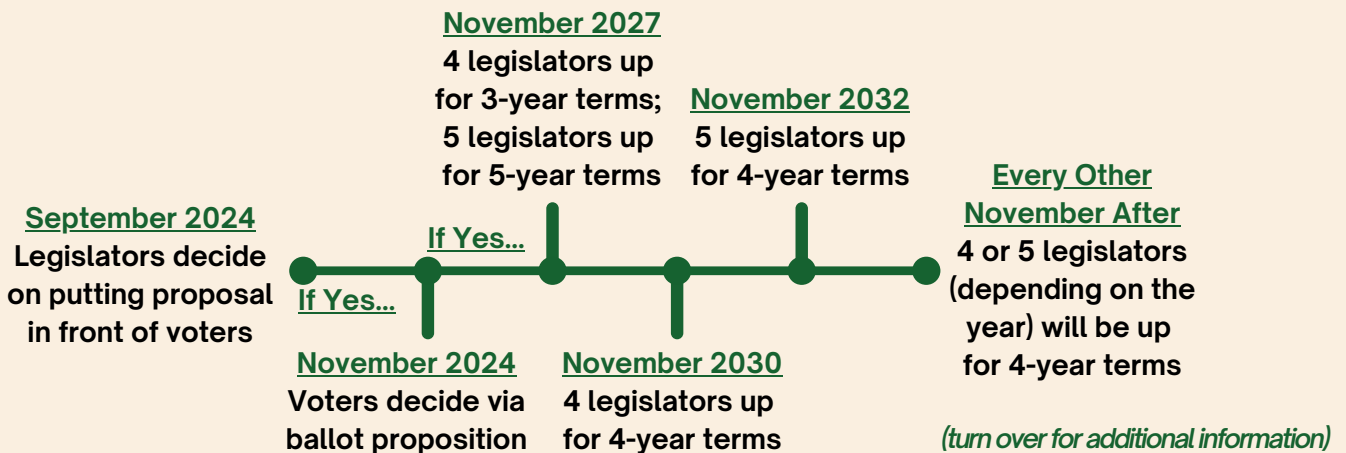
Staggered terms are created via elections where only part of the elected body - in this case, the Legislature - is up for election in a particular year.

## Why Is the Legislature Considering This?

The Sullivan County Charter Review Commission has repeatedly recommended that not all legislator positions be up for election in the same year. The concern is that all nine could be replaced at the same time, leading to a loss of institutional knowledge and a steep learning curve, both of which could be detrimental to County operations and thus taxpayers.

## What Is Being Proposed?

The County Charter currently requires all nine (9) legislator seats to be put up for vote every four (4) years. This proposal would ask voters to approve a change to the Charter, stipulating that at the next County Legislature election in November 2027, four (4) positions would be up for vote for a term of three (3) years, running from January 2028 to December 2030; and five (5) positions would be up for vote for a term of five (5) years, running from January 2028 to December 2032. After those terms run out, all nine (9) positions would revert to four-year terms, but as a result, there would be a Legislature election every two (2) years, thus “staggering” legislators’ terms of office.





## Why Are the Terms Being Proposed This Way?

The Legislature has considered this change for several years, and with New York State now mandating some local elections only occur in even-numbered years, this is seen as the most efficient way to split up the positions. If voters approve this change, legislators will conduct a random selection (for example, picking names out of a hat or drawing straws) to determine which positions will be up for three years and which will be up for five years.

## So What's Next?

A public hearing on the proposed local law is set for Thursday, September 5 at 8:45 a.m. in the Hearing Room of the Government Center, 100 North Street, Monticello. Anyone who wishes to speak or hear about staggered terms is welcome. (Note that this will not be a Q&A session.) Anyone who cannot or will not attend the hearing can provide comment **at any time before the meeting** to Clerk of the Legislature Anmarie Martin by mail, addressed to her at 100 North Street, Monticello, NY 12701, or by email to [anmarie.martin@sullivanny.us](mailto:anmarie.martin@sullivanny.us).

Legislators will then have to vote on whether or not to put the idea to voters. They are expected to make that decision at a special meeting immediately after the public hearing on Thursday, September 5 in the Hearing Room of the Government Center, 100 North Street, Monticello. The meeting will be public.

If the majority of legislators adopt the local law, the question will be put to voters as part of the General Election ballot this Election Day, Tuesday, November 5 (and in Early Voting/Absentee ballots). If a majority of voters say no, then the proposed local law will not be adopted, and no change will occur. If a majority of voters say yes, then preparations will begin as detailed above.

## Who Can I Talk To More About This?

Your own legislator is your best resource on this and other County Legislature matters. A complete list of their contact information is available at <https://sullivanny.us/Departments/Legislature> or by calling 845-807-0435.

More information, as it becomes available, will be posted to [www.sullivanny.us](http://www.sullivanny.us) and on local and social media outlets.