



OFFICE *of the* SECRETARY *of* STATE

Alexi Giannoulias • Secretary of State

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Giannoulias Opens State Flag Redesign Contest

*Illinoisans can submit designs online or via mail until Oct. 18
General Assembly to decide to adopt new flag or stick with existing flag*



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Illinois Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias announced today that the Illinois Flag Commission will begin accepting public submissions for a new state flag design beginning Tuesday, Sept. 3.

The commission will accept design ideas for consideration from the public – online or via mail – until Oct. 18. The commission also plans to work with schools and local libraries to inform Illinoisans about the process and encourage residents to take part.

The commission was created in 2023 after Senate Bill 1818, sponsored by State Senator Doris Turner (48th District—Springfield) and State Representative Kam Buckner (26th District—Chicago) was signed into law.

“I’m excited to see the creativity of Illinois residents and how they display their passion for our great state,” said Giannoulias whose office is responsible for chairing the

commission. “The symbols that represent and unify our state are important and this presents an excellent opportunity to engage Illinoisans and showcase their pride.”

“History is living, breathing and ever-evolving,” said State Senator Doris Turner (D-Springfield). “We need to ensure government is evolving with the times so people are engaged and a part of what is going on across the state. To start the conversation, I led the initiative to create the Illinois Flag Commission, which is tasked with deciding whether the current state flag should be replaced with a redesigned state flag. We need a flag that truly represents Illinois – a state with a strong workforce, an agriculture champion and so much more.”

“Our flag embodies the rich tapestry of Illinois—from the mighty Mississippi to the shores of Lake Michigan. It reflects our history, our people, and the spirit of our state,” said Buckner. “A new design presents a unique opportunity to honor our heritage while showcasing the evolving story of Illinois.”

The commission will select 10 designs based on how they reflect the identity of Illinois and will host an online public survey for residents to vote on their favorites or to keep the current flag. Voting will begin Jan. 1 and last six weeks.

Some general guidance for submissions includes:

- Design elements can include natural features of the state, history and culture of the state.
- No limit on flag shape or ratio but designs may be edited by the commission.
- No limit on colors but recommended less than three colors for clarity of design.
- Participants can visit www.ilsos.gov and [upload online](#) or submit their design via mail addressed to Illinois Flag Commission, Howlett Building, Room 476, 501 S. Second St., Springfield, IL 62756
- Participants are required to provide their first and last name, address, email address and phone number. They are also required to explain their relationship to Illinois and provide a description of their flag entry (each category limited to 500 characters).
- To upload an image, the file will need to be 5 MB or less and in PNG, GIF, or JPG format.
- There should be no watermarks or frames around the image.
- By submitting a design to the Commission, the designer is authorizing the Commission and the State of Illinois to take ownership of the design

- Persons under 18 may submit designs if submitted in coordination with a parent/guardian, teacher or adult mentor.
- Designs cannot be copied from other designs or use existing logos or copyrighted materials; however, the design can include elements or reproductions of the State Seal or any prior Illinois State flag.
- Designs cannot be AI generated.
- Submissions are limited to three per person.
- Submissions from outside the United States, i.e. military bases, need to be made by regular mail.

After public feedback, the commission will report its findings to the Illinois General Assembly, whose members will vote on whether to adopt a new flag or retain the current flag design.

The bill allows for the commission to evaluate if a new state flag would better represent the state's diversity of urban, suburban and rural communities and inspire renewed state pride among Illinoisians.

The commission is chaired by David Joens, Director of the Illinois State Archives, on behalf of the Secretary of State. Its members also include:

- Three members appointed by the governor
- Four members each appointed by the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Senate Minority Leader and the House Minority Leader.
- A representative from the State Superintendent of Education and one from the Board of the Illinois State Museum will also be commission members.

Illinois has joined other states in seeking a new state flag design. Minnesota unveiled its new flag in December 2023, using a similar method to the one adopted by Illinois. Both Michigan and Maine are also considering an official change in their state flags.