Disclaimer: This guide is designed for informational purposes only. It is not legal advice and is not intended to create an attorney-client relationship. The Election Protection Coalition does not warrant any information contained in this guide, nor does the Coalition suggest that the information in this guide should be used as a basis to pursue legal advice or decision-making.

Note: This FAQ is not exhaustive. Situations or inquiries may arise that are not answered below. In those circumstances, contact your hotline captain or command center for assistance. Please make sure to record all of the voter’s contact information should follow-up be necessary.

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#### 1. Am I registered to vote?

You can determine whether a voter is registered to vote by checking the District of Columbia Board of Elections website ([https://www.dcboe.org/Voters/Register-To-Vote/Check-Voter-Registration-Status](https://www.dcboe.org/Voters/Register-To-Vote/Check-Voter-Registration-Status)).

#### 2. Where do I vote?

**For the June 2, 2020 primary**, the District of Columbia will operate 20 vote centers. Please refer the DC Voter Guide for locations: [https://www.dcboe.org/dcboe/media/PDFFiles/Voter-Guide-4-16-2020-Final-4.pdf](https://www.dcboe.org/dcboe/media/PDFFiles/Voter-Guide-4-16-2020-Final-4.pdf)

You can determine a voter’s proper polling place by checking the District of Columbia Board of Elections website ([https://www.vote4dc.com/SearchElection/SearchByAddress](https://www.vote4dc.com/SearchElection/SearchByAddress)). If a voter has moved recently and has not updated his or her voter registration, refer to **Question #6**.

#### 3. When do the polls open and close?

You can determine a voter’s proper polling place by checking the District of Columbia Board of Elections website ([https://www.vote4dc.com/SearchElection/SearchByAddress](https://www.vote4dc.com/SearchElection/SearchByAddress)). If a voter has moved recently and has not updated his or her voter registration, refer to **Question #6**.
The polls will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time.\textsuperscript{1} Voters in line by 8:00 p.m. must be allowed to vote.\textsuperscript{2}

If you are a hotline volunteer or a field volunteer and a polling place prohibits those who were in line to vote before 8:00 p.m. from voting, advise voters to stay at the polling location and contact your hotline captain/commander center.

\textbf{4. When is/was the voter registration deadline?}

Voters must apply to register to vote 21 calendar days before an election in which they intend to vote. For the June 2, 2020 primary election, the deadline is May 12, 2020.\textsuperscript{3}

Washington, D.C., also has same day registration, which is discussed in detail in \textbf{Question 18}.

\textbf{5. Can I vote without providing identification?}

Yes; Washington, D.C. does not require identification to vote. However, some polling places require ID to enter the facility. It is therefore encouraged that voters bring some form of identification with them to vote.

If you are registering to vote for the first time in D.C. and you submit your application by mail or online, you must either include a copy of one of the following documents with your application or present a copy of the document the first time you vote:

- A copy of a current and valid government-issued photo identification that shows your name and address
- A copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, or paycheck that shows your name and address (issued no earlier than 90 days before the date you mail your application or, if you do not submit proof by mail or online, 90 days before the date you vote)
- Any government-issued document that shows your name and address.\textsuperscript{4}

Additionally, a voter registering during the early voting period, or at the polls on Election Day, must provide proof of residence that shows the voter’s name and address.\textsuperscript{5} Individuals who fail to present this identification may vote by a provisional ballot (special ballot).\textsuperscript{6}

Acceptable forms of proof of residence include:

- A copy of a current and valid government-issued photo identification
- A utility bill for water, gas, electricity, cable, internet, telephone, or cellular phone service issued no earlier than 90 days before the election
- A savings, checking, credit or money market account statement from a bank or credit union issued no earlier than 90 days before the election
- A paycheck, stub, or earning statement that includes the employer’s name, address, and telephone number and was issued no earlier than 90 days before the election
- A government-issued document or check from a federal or District agency, other than the Board of Elections, issued no earlier than 90 days before the election
- A current residential lease or rental agreement
- An occupancy statement from a District homeless shelter issued no earlier than 90 days before the election
• A tuition or housing bill from a District of Columbia college or university issued for the current academic or housing term

The address on the proof of residence document must match the residence address on the registration application.7

6. I have moved and I didn’t update my voter registration, can I vote?

Yes. Voters who have moved within D.C. may vote at the polling place serving their current address if they file a change of address notice on Election Day at that same polling place.8 The voter must provide proof of residence.9 (See Question 5.)

If the voter does not have acceptable proof of residence, he or she will be required to vote by special ballot at the new polling place and will have until 5:00 p.m. on the Thursday following Election Day to present acceptable proof of residence to the Board of Elections in order to have his or her special ballot counted.10

7. What should I do if there are equipment problems at my precinct?

Voters should immediately notify election officers if the voting equipment breaks down while the polls are open. The Board of Elections may extend the polling hours for that precinct if there is a mechanical failure of a voting machine.11

8. I am a registered voter who is not on the rolls at the precinct where I currently am. Can I vote where I am?

A voter must vote at his or her assigned precinct. A voter may vote using a special ballot if their name is not on the voter registration list but they believe they are a registered voter and eligible to vote in the election.12

9. My name isn’t showing up on the list of registered voters – could it have been removed?

If a voter’s name does not appear on the list of registered voters for the polling place, he or she can cast a special ballot. The election official will place the ballot in a sealed envelope and have the voter sign the outside of the envelope and provide information the Board of Elections deems necessary to determine that the individual is qualified to have the vote counted. The official in charge of the polling place should give the voter written notification of the right to appeal the Board’s determination that the voter is not qualified to vote in the election.13

A voter’s name can be removed from the list of registered voters for several reasons: the voter did not confirm his or her address with the Board of Elections and did not vote in the previous two elections;14 the voter sent a signed request to cancel the registration; death of a registrant; upon notification of a registrant’s incarceration for conviction of a felony; or upon notification that the registrant has registered to vote in another jurisdiction.15

Election Protection hotline volunteers can take steps to help to determine why a voter’s name is not appearing on the list of registered voters:

• Check the voter’s registration status using the registration lookup tool to make sure he/she is registered to vote and at the right place. (See Question #1.)
• Has the voter moved recently? Could he/she be registered at an old address? Check the old address in the registration lookup tool. (See Question #1.)
• Has the voter changed his/her name recently, or could he/she be registered under a different name? Check that name (and any variations of the voter’s name, especially for hyphenated names, which sometimes trip up databases) in the registration lookup tool. (See Question #1.)
• When/where did the voter register to vote? Was it before the registration deadline?

10. I have a criminal conviction. Can I vote?

It depends. A person who is convicted of a felony in the District cannot vote during his/her period of incarceration. District residents automatically regain the right to vote upon completing the period of incarceration and can vote while on probation or parole. The voter must re-register to vote after the period of incarceration.

11. I have been offered a special (provisional) ballot. What should I do?

Inquire why the voter was offered a special ballot. A voter should be offered a special ballot only when:
• The voter’s name is not on the list of eligible voters for the precinct in which he or she is seeking to vote or the voter’s name or address is incorrectly printed;
• The voter cannot verify his or her residency while at the polling place;
• A voter applied for an absentee ballot but subsequently claims that they did not receive or use the absentee ballot to vote;
• A federal or state court order extends the time for closing the polls beyond that established by state law and the voter votes during the extended period of time;
• The voter has been challenged and had that challenge accepted;
• The poll book indicates that the voter has already checked in to vote; or
• The voter has moved, has failed to update his or her address, and wishes to vote at the new polling place, but did not provide acceptable proof of residence.

Other than for these reasons, the voter should be able to cast a regular ballot. A special ballot should be a last resort. However, if the voter must cast a special ballot, the precinct captain should give the voter a phone number to call which enables the voter to check the Board of Election’s decision whether to count or reject the voter’s ballot and the reason for the decision. The voter can also look up the status of the special ballot online the day after the election to find out if the special ballot was counted.

12. I am a college student. Can I register to vote where I go to school?

Yes. College students who meet the generally applicable registration requirements may register to vote. Moving to a school in Washington, D.C. with present intent to make the school address the student’s principal home is generally sufficient to establish residency (e.g., the student plans to return to his or her school address after any temporary absence like summer vacation). The student must have maintained a residence in the District for at least thirty days (30) days preceding the election and may not claim voting residence or the right to vote in any other state or territory. A college or university housing statement, or any utility bill or government issued document, may serve as proof of DC residence.

13. I am physically disabled and need assistance. Will my polling place be accessible?

Yes. All polling places in D.C. should be accessible to people with disabilities. A senior or a voter with a disability whose precinct is inaccessible may be assigned by the Board to an accessible polling place.
Voters who are unable for reason of disability, seniority or illness, to enter a polling place on Election Day may also arrange to vote from their car.  

14. I am blind, physically disabled, or cannot read English and require assistance in order to vote. Can I get assistance at the polls? 

Yes. Voters with vision, mobility and other impairments will be able to vote privately and independently at the polls on Election Day. Each polling place has at least two accessible voting machines. For all voters, including those who are blind or disabled, every polling place has a touch-screen machine equipped with an audio ballot. A precinct worker will be available at the polling place to provide help with operating the voting machine, if assistance is needed and requested by the voter. 

A voter who is unable to mark the ballot or use the touch-screen may request assistance. The voter has the right to choose who will provide assistance (though the person providing the assistance cannot be a poll watcher, election observer, the voter’s employer or agent of that employer, or officer or agent of the voter’s union). 

15. I don’t know how to use the voting equipment. Can I get help? 

Yes. The voter may ask poll workers for instructions on how to use the equipment. Any voter who requires assistance in voting may be given assistance by a person of the voter’s choice (other than a poll watcher, or election observer, the voter’s employer or agent of that employer, or officer or agent of the voter’s union). Assistance provided to a voter may include, though is not limited to, marking the ballot in accordance with the voter’s expressed wishes. 

Written instructions on the operation of the voting process must be available to all voters. A trained polling place official also must be available to explain the voting process to a voter. 

16. Can I vote absentee or vote in person before Election Day? 

Yes. Any registered voter may vote by absentee ballot, for any reason. Voters also may vote early in person not more than 10 days before Election Day. For the June 2, 2020, Primary Election, the early voting period is between May 22, 2020 and May 29, 2020. Early voting centers are open every day during this period between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Voters can find a list of early voting locations by visiting the Board of Elections website (https://earlyvoting.dcboe.org/). 

Absentee ballot applications must be received at least seven days before the election; May 26, 2020, is the application deadline for the June 2, 2020, Primary Election. Voted absentee ballots must be received by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day. Voters can track their absentee ballot by visiting https://www.dcboe.org/Voters/Absentee-Voting/Track-Absentee-Ballot. 

17. What if I requested an absentee ballot but I want to vote in person on Election Day? 

A voter may vote in person on Election Day by going to the voter’s assigned polling place. However, the voter will be required to vote by a special ballot if he or she applied to vote absentee but subsequently claims that he or she did not receive or use the absentee ballot to vote. 

18. Does my state have Same Day Registration? If so, what is the process?
Yes. If a voter is not registered to vote, they may register on Election Day at the polling place that serves their residence address, or at an Early Voting Center (EVC) during the early voting period, provided they show acceptable proof of residence. Acceptable forms of proof of residence include:

- A copy of current and valid government-issued photo identification
- A utility bill for water, gas, electricity, cable, internet, telephone, or cellular phone service issued no earlier than 90 days before the election
- A savings, checking, credit, or money market account statement from a bank or credit union issued no earlier than 90 days before the election
- A paycheck, stub, or earning statement that includes the employer’s name, address, and telephone number and was issued no earlier than 90 days before the election
- A government-issued document or check from a federal or District agency, other than the Board of Elections, issued no earlier than 90 days before the election
- A current residential lease or rental agreement
- An occupancy statement from a District homeless shelter issued no earlier than 90 days before the election
- A tuition or housing bill from a District of Columbia college or university issued for the current academic or housing term

The address on the proof of residence document must match the residence address listed on the voter’s registration application.

After providing acceptable proof of residence, the voter will be asked to complete a Registration Update Form which will be returned to the DC Board of Elections following the election. Once the voter has completed the Registration Update Form, they will be issued a regular ballot. The voter should receive a voter card with their updated information within six to eight weeks of Election Day.  

If a voter does not provide acceptable proof of residence, the voter must vote a special ballot and will have until 5:00 p.m. on the Thursday following Election Day to present acceptable proof of residence to the Board of Elections in order to have their special ballot counted. For the June 2, 2020 Primary Election, the deadline for presenting proof of residence is June 4, 2020.

19. What rules apply to people campaigning or “hanging around” my polling place? Can people approach me?

No political activity, which includes any activity designed to persuade a person to vote for or against any candidate or any issue or question that is on the ballot, or to persuade a person to refrain from voting, is permitted within fifty (50) feet from any door used to enter the voting place. If anyone approaches the voter to pressure the voter in any way, the voter should ask to speak with the precinct captain (the person overseeing the operations of the polling place) and report the issue immediately. Media representatives are also prohibited from approaching any voters and interviewing them in the voting place.

Voters may not capture any close-up image of a ballot or a voter’s selection on the ballot.

20. Someone is formally challenging my right to vote. What do I do?

Voters may only be challenged in writing by a registered voter. If a voter is formally challenged in writing, the precinct captain (the person overseeing the operations of the polling place) or another official in charge of the polling place will give the challenged voter an opportunity to respond.
If the precinct captain reviews the evidence presented and decides the challenged voter is qualified, and
the challenger does not appeal, the voter can vote a regular ballot. If the challenger appeals the precinct
captain’s decision to the Board of Elections, a hearing with the Board’s hearing officer will be held by
telephone; if the hearing officer decides the voter is eligible, the voter can vote a regular ballot.

If the precinct captain affirms the challenge, or the challenger appeals the precinct captain’s decision and
the Board’s hearing officer decides the voter is not qualified, the voter will only be allowed to vote a
“challenged” ballot. The Board will review the eligibility of the voter casting a challenged ballot and
decide whether to count the vote or not. The Board will inform the voter of its decision and, if it decides to
reject the challenged vote, the voter will have an opportunity to argue that the vote should be counted.
The voter also has the right to appeal the Board’s decision to the court within one business day after the
date of the Board’s decision.  

21. Can I vote in the primary election?

The presidential primary in Washington, DC is “closed”, meaning that voters must be registered members
of the party holding the primary to vote in the primary. Unaffiliated voters cannot participate in primary
elections. Voters have until 21 days before the primary election to change their party affiliation. The
deadline for registered voters to change party affiliation is May 12, 2020. Requests for change of party
affiliation status made after the 21st day before a primary election, including requests made on Election
Day, will be held and processed after the election.

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1 D.C. Code § 1-1001.10(b)(1).
3 D.C. Code § 1-1001.07(g)(1).
5 D.C. Code § 1-1001.07(g)(5).
6 D.C. Code § 1-1001.07(i)(6).
8 D.C. Code § 1-1001.07(i)(4)(C).
9 D.C. Code § 1-1001.07(i)(4)(A)
11 D.C. Code § 1-1001.10(b)(1).
12 D.C. Code § 1-1001.07(i)(6).
13 D.C. Code § 1-1001.09(d-1).
14 D.C. Code § 1-1001.07(j)(2).
15 D.C. Code § 1-1001.07(k)(1).
16 D.C. Code § 1-1001.02(2)(D).
18 D.C. Code § 1-1001.09(d-1); D.C. Mun. Regs. tit. 3, § 700.5(d) (2019).
19 D.C. Code § 1-1001.07(i)(6).
21 D.C. Code § 1-1001.09(d-2).
25 D.C. Code § 1-1001.09(e)(2).
27 D.C. Code § 1-1001.02(16)(A); see also Dunn v. Blumstein, 405 U.S. 330, 330 (1972); Williams v. Salerno, 792 F.2d 323, 328 (2d Cir. 1986).
30 D.C. Code § 1-1001.09(b)(3).
32 D.C. Code § 1-1001.09(f).
33 D.C. Code § 1-1001.05(a)(15); D.C. Mun. Regs. tit. 3 § 713.1 (2019).
35 D.C. Mun. Regs. tit. 3 § 713.8 (2019).
36 D.C. Code § 1-1001.09(b)(2).
37 D.C. Code § 1-1001.09(b-1)(2).
40 D.C. Mun. Regs. tit. 3 § 700.05(f) (2019).
46 D.C. Code § 1-1001.09(d).