**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?**


2. **Where do I vote?**

Voters can determine their proper polling place by checking the [South Carolina Election Commission's website](http://www.scvotes.gov/data/Precincts.html). They can also download precinct information from the Election Commission website: [http://www.scvotes.gov/data/Precincts.html](http://www.scvotes.gov/data/Precincts.html). Due to the impact of the...
COVID-19 pandemic on elections in South Carolina this election cycle, voters are strongly encouraged to confirm their polling place locations before going to the polls by checking the South Carolina Election Commission’s website as well as their county election office’s website and/or social media accounts (if the county has a website or social media accounts) to check for last minute changes.

If a voter has moved recently and has not updated their voter registration, refer to Question #6.

3. When do the polls open and close?

The polls must be open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Election Day. If you are a hotline volunteer or a field volunteer and a polling place is not open at 7:00 a.m., advise voters to stay at the polling location and contact your hotline captain/command center. A voter in line at the polling place by 7:00 p.m. must be allowed to vote.

4. When is/was the voter registration deadline?

Voters must register to vote at least 30 days before an election. For the June 9, 2020 Statewide Primaries, the deadline for in person applications was 5:00 p.m. on Friday May 8, 2020 (or by May 10th of the voter’s locality offered in-person weekend voter registration hours); online, fax and email applications must have been submitted by Sunday, May 10, 2020; and mail-in registration must be postmarked no later than Monday, May 11, 2020.

Many South Carolina municipal elections were postponed to July 14, 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The municipal elections that were postponed to July 14, 2020 can be found here. The voter registration deadline for the July 14, 2020 municipal elections is 5:00 p.m. on Friday, June 12, 2020 for in person applications (or through Sunday June 14, 2020 if the voter’s locality offers weekend registration hours); Sunday, June 14, 2020 for online, fax and emailed voter registration applications; and mail-in registration applications must be postmarked by no later than June 15, 2020.

For the November 3, 2020 General Election, the deadline for in person applications is 5:00 p.m. on Friday October 2, 2020, unless the voter’s locality has weekend registration hours through October 4, 2020; online, fax, and email applications must be submitted by October 4, 2020; and mail-in registrations must be postmarked on October 5, 2020. Exceptions to this rule are:

- If a person was discharged or separated from their service in the Armed Forces and arrived home too late to register, they may register up to 5:00 pm on the day of the election. They can apply to register at the office of the board of voter registration and elections in the county they are voting in.
- If a person becomes old enough to vote after the voting registration deadline, but before the election, they can still register to vote in the 30 days leading up to the election at the office of the board of voter registration and elections in the county they are voting in.
5. Can I vote without providing identification?

A Photo ID is required to vote in South Carolina. The ID must be valid and current. Acceptable forms of ID include:

- South Carolina Driver’s License;
- Photo ID issued by the DMV;
- Passport;
- Photo Military ID issued by the federal government; and
- South Carolina voter registration card with photograph.

If you have one of these forms of photo ID, but do not have the identification with you, you may leave, get your photo ID, and return to vote by regular ballot. Otherwise, you may vote by provisional ballot. Your provisional ballot will ONLY count if you show photo ID to the election commissioner prior to certification of the election (usually Thursday after a primary election and Friday after all other elections). A provisional ballot should be used only as a matter of last resort.

If you cannot produce one of the acceptable forms of photo ID due to a religious objection to being photographed, you may complete an affidavit at the polling place stating that you: (i) are the same individual who personally appeared at the polling place; (ii) cast a provisional ballot on election day; and (iii) have a religious objection to being photographed. When the affidavit is completed, you may cast a provisional ballot. A provisional ballot should be used only as a matter of last resort.

If you cannot produce one of the acceptable forms of photo ID because of an impediment that prevents you from obtaining one, you may complete an affidavit at the polling place and affirm that you: (i) are the same individual who personally appeared at the polling place; (ii) cast the provisional ballot on election day; and (iii) you suffer from a reasonable impediment that prevents you from obtaining photograph identification. You must also list the impediment. Upon completion of the affidavit, you may cast a provisional ballot.

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

It depends on when and where the voter moved. Refer to the table below (and see also “Failsafe Voting” at https://www.scvotes.gov/south-carolina-voting-information-page):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moved within 30 days of</th>
<th>Moved within the same precinct</th>
<th>Moved to a different precinct but within the same county</th>
<th>Moved to a different county but within the same state</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moved within 30 days of</td>
<td>Because the polling place will be the same for the new and old</td>
<td>You have two options: 1. You can go to the voter registration</td>
<td>You have two options: 1. You can go to the voter registration office in the new</td>
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| **election day** | address, go to that polling place and complete a change of address form. You will be able to cast a regular ballot. | office, complete a change of address form, and vote a full ballot.  
2. You can go to your previous polling place and vote a provisional ballot containing only federal, state, countywide and municipality-wide offices after completing change of address form. | county, complete a change of address form, and vote a full ballot.  
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<tr>
<td><strong>Moved more than 30 days before election day</strong></td>
<td>Because the polling place will be the same for the new and old address, go to that polling place and complete a change of address form. You will be able to cast a regular ballot.</td>
<td>You need to notify the board of voter registration and election of your address within the county. They will notify you of your new precinct.</td>
<td>You need to re-register in your new county at least 30 days prior to the election.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If a voter moves to South Carolina from another state within 30 days of election day, the voter may vote for President and Vice President only in their previous state and county of residence (either in person or by absentee ballot).

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

Voters should immediately notify the election officers if the voting equipment breaks down. A voter can use an emergency paper ballot, and should request one if it is not offered.

If you are a hotline volunteer and learn of equipment not working properly at a polling place, notify your hotline captain, who will notify a voting machine expert or speak with election officials.

If you are a field volunteer at a polling place and the equipment is not working properly, notify the command center, which will notify a voting machine expert.

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?

If a voter is not found on the rolls of the polling place where the voter is attempting to vote, the precinct must call the county registration office.
• If the county registration office responds that the voter is registered and in the correct precinct, the precinct worker will ask the voter for their date of birth. Upon answering correctly, the voter may vote a regular ballot.  
• If the poll worker says the voter is not eligible to vote at a particular precinct, but the voter believes they are eligible, that voter can cast a provisional ballot. However, if it is later determined that the voter was at the wrong precinct, then the provisional ballot will NOT count.

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

A voter’s name can only be removed from the list of registered voters by:

• Their written request
• An adjudication of mental incompetence,
• Death,
• A change in residence, or
• In connection with a voter registration list maintenance program.

A voter is disqualified from voting if they:

• Have been declared mentally incompetent by a court,
• Are serving a prison term for a criminal conviction, or
• Are convicted of a felony or offense against the election laws. If a voter was previously convicted of an election-related offense, the voter must have served the entire sentence, including probation or parole, or have received a pardon for the conviction to be qualified to vote again.

Any voter whose name was removed in one of the above ways and who later becomes eligible to vote must re-register in order to have their name restored to the statewide voter registration system.

Note that you can take steps to help determine why a voter’s name is not on the list of registered voters:

• Check the voter’s registration status using the registration lookup tool to make sure they be registered to vote and at the right place. (See Question #1.)
• Has the voter moved recently? Could they be registered at an old address? Check that address in the registration lookup tool. (See Question #1 and Question #6.)
• Has the voter changed their name recently, or could they 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 that before the deadline? (See Question #4.)
10. I have a criminal conviction. Can I vote?

A citizen cannot vote in South Carolina if they are incarcerated while serving a criminal sentence. A citizen is also not eligible to vote in South Carolina if they have been convicted of a felony or offenses against the election laws and have not fully completed the terms of the sentence, including completion of probation, parole or have been pardoned. Once the citizen has fully completed the terms of the sentence for a felony or offenses against the election laws or has been pardoned, they may register again to vote and vote a regular ballot.27

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

Inquire why you were offered a provisional ballot. A voter should be offered a provisional ballot only when:

- The voter’s name doesn’t appear on the voter rolls and their eligibility to vote cannot otherwise be established (see Question #8);28
- The voter does not provide the required Photo ID (see Question #5);29
- The voter’s eligibility to vote has been challenged by a manager, poll watcher or other voter;30 or
- Other similar situations in which the voter believes they are entitled to cast a ballot.

Other than for these reasons, the voter should be able to cast a regular ballot. A **provisional ballot should be a last resort**.

If you cast a provisional ballot, remember to ask a poll worker if any additional steps are needed to make sure your ballot is counted. You should be given written instructions (Notice of Provisional Ballot Hearing) on how to show your photo ID to the county election commission prior to certification of the election, including the time and place of the county election commission hearings to be held on provisional ballots.31


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

Yes. You can register to vote where you live while attending college. It is generally sufficient to establish residency by moving to a school in South Carolina with the present intent to make the school’s address your principal home without the present intent to return to your former home after graduation.32

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

Each county board of voter registration and elections must provide at least one polling place, called the Countywide Barrier-Free Voting Precinct, for use by physically handicapped voters.
They also must provide paper ballots instead of voting machines in the Countywide Barrier-Free Voting Precinct.

Any physically handicapped voter, regardless of the voter’s place of residence in the county, may vote in the Countywide Barrier-Free Voting Precinct as long as the voter meets both of the below requirements:

- The voter either cannot walk without the aid of a wheelchair, leg braces, crutches or a walker, or suffers from a lung disease such that they are unable to walk without the aid of a respirator.
- The voter applied in writing to the county board of voter registration and elections for a transfer to the Countywide Barrier Free Voting Precinct at least 30 days prior to the election and the application was approved. A voter whose physical handicap is permanent, as certified by a licensed physician, is not required to register once they have done so initially.

Finally, precinct workers must allow elderly or disabled voters who are unable stand in line or cannot enter the polling place because of their age or physical handicap to present their identification materials and vote from the nearest available parking spot in the vehicle that brought them to the polling place.

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. Any voter who needs assistance in voting by reason of blindness, disability, or inability to read or write is entitled to have a poll worker and a person of their choice, other than the voter’s employer, an agent of the employer, or an officer or agent of the voter’s union, mark the voter’s choices or assist the voter in marking their choices on the ballot.

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

Voting information and instructions should be available at each polling location. A voter can ask a precinct official for help in using the voting system from a precinct official.

16. Can I vote absentee or vote in person before election day?

Absentee voting allows registered voters to vote by mail or in-person before election day. For general information on absentee voting in South Carolina, see https://www.scvotes.gov/absentee-voting.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all registered South Carolina voters will be permitted to vote by absentee ballots in person or by mail for the June 2020 elections only, including the Statewide Primaries and Runoffs, by choosing Reason 18 - State of Emergency on the absentee application.
The deadline to request is June 5. To apply for an absentee ballot online go to: scvotes.gov/absentee-voting. To request on-line, you must be able to print the application. (If you apply on-line, your absentee excuse may automatically be used to generate applications to vote absentee for both the June Primary and the November General election. If you choose “Excuse 18: State of Emergency” as your reason for requesting an absentee ballot, just discard the November application as that excuse, at this point, is not recognized as a valid excuse for the November election.) You may return the application by mail, by email, or in person.

You may also request an application by telephone from your County Board of Elections. This link lists the telephone numbers of all the county boards. https://www.scvotes.gov/how-register-absentee-voting.

Remember that the June 9th election is a primary, so you must request a ballot specific to the party. Such a request only relates to the June 9th primary.

After you submit your application, your absentee ballot will be mailed to you. You will need to ballot, fill it out and send it back. You do not need a witness. A court ruling issued on May 25, 2020 struck down that requirement for this election. You, however, must read the oath and sign the outside envelope in which you return the ballot. A photo ID is not required to vote absentee by mail. You must put a stamp on the return envelope.

If you decide it is safe for you, you may choose to vote absentee in-person at the county voter registration office now through June 8. A photo ID (or an affidavit of reasonable impediment) is required to vote absentee in person. And, of course, you may still vote at your precinct on June 9th, Election Day. Check your precinct location before you go as many counties are having difficulty recruiting enough poll workers to staff as many locations as are usually open.

Your absentee ballot must be received no later than 7 PM on Election Day, so be sure to return yours as soon as you can.

For elections occurring on or after July 1, 2020, the previous limitations on who is eligible to vote in South Carolina by absentee ballot will apply as described below:

There are three types of voting before election day in South Carolina:

- **Absentee voting by mail:** This type of absentee voting allows a voter or a near relative or legal guardian to request that an absentee ballot be sent to the voter by mail. Any registered South Carolina voter in one of the following categories can request a mail-in absentee ballot if they are absent from their county of residence on election day during the hours the polls are open:
  - students, their spouses, and dependents residing with them;
  - people serving with the American Red Cross or with the USO who are attached to the Armed Forces, their spouses, and dependents residing with them;
  - governmental employees, their spouses, and dependents residing with them;
  - people on vacation; and
o overseas citizens.\footnote{38}

In addition, the following voters can request an absentee ballot and vote absentee, whether or not they are absent from their county of residence on election day:

- physically disabled persons;
- persons who have to be at work during polling hours and who present written certification of that work obligation to the county board of voter registration and elections;
- certified poll watchers, poll managers, county board of voter registration and elections members and staff, county and state election commission members and staff working on election day;
- persons attending sick or physically disabled persons;
- persons admitted to hospitals as emergency patients on the day of an election or within a four-day period before the election;
- persons with a death or funeral in the family within a three-day period before the election;
- persons who will be serving as jurors in a state or federal court on election day;
- persons sixty-five years of age or older;
- persons confined to a jail or pretrial facility pending disposition of arrest or trial; or
- members of the Armed Forces and Merchant Marines of the United States, their spouses, and dependents residing with them.\footnote{39}

Voters (or their near relative or legal guardian) can obtain an absentee ballot application on the State Election Commission website (\url{https://info.scvotes.sc.gov/eng/voterinquiry/VoterInformationRequest.aspx?PageMode=AbsenteeRequest}) or at their county voter registration office.

**An application for an absentee ballot that is submitted by mail must be received by the voter’s county board of elections by 5:00 p.m. four days before the election to be processed.** An application for absentee ballot that is submitted in-person must submitted by 5:00 p.m. the day before the election.\footnote{40}

The voter must return the ballot to the county voter registration office so that it is **received by no later than 7:00 p.m. on the day of the election.** \footnote{41}

- **Early Voting** (also called one-stop absentee voting or in-person absentee voting): Registered voters may go in person to their county board of elections office (or an alternative location) to vote an absentee ballot. One-stop absentee voting ends at 5:00 p.m. on the day before the election.\footnote{42} You can find the locations and times of early voting polling places at: \url{https://www.scvotes.gov/how-register-absentee-voting}

- **Military-Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting:** Overseas and military voters (and their dependents) may request an absentee ballot by completing the Federal Post Card Application. Please refer to the South Carolina fact sheet on Military & Overseas Citizens
at https://www.scvotes.gov/military-overseas-citizens The fact sheet answers questions about the application, deadlines and more.

- The application can also be filled out online at the South Carolina page of the Federal Voting Assistance Program website or downloaded from the website and brought to the voter’s local election office.

The Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB) is a back-up ballot that can be used by overseas and military voters. (See also discussion in the fact sheet linked in the preceding bullet.) If the voter is an active duty member of the Uniformed Services or Merchant Marine, or a spouse or dependent of an active duty member, the voter can use the FWAB whether they are located inside or outside the United States (including APO and FPO addresses), provided that they are away from their voting residence for service-related activities. The voter must apply for a regular ballot early enough for their local election officials to receive the request at least 5 days before the election. If the voter does not receive their regular ballot in time, the voter may use the FWAB. To request a FWAB, the voter may complete the form online at the South Carolina page of the Federal Voting Assistance Program website or download the form from the website and bring it to their local election office.

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

If you have been issued an absentee ballot, you may not vote in person on election day unless you can provide a certificate from the county board of voter registration that your absentee ballot has been returned unmarked.

18. Does my state have Same Day Registration? If so, what is the process?

Except for a person who was discharged or separated from their service in the Armed Forces and arrived home too late to register (see Question #4), South Carolina does not have same day registration.

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

It is unlawful on an election day within two hundred feet of any entrance used by the voters to enter the polling place for a person to distribute any type of campaign literature or place any political poster.

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

When a person is challenged, the poll manager must explain to the voter the qualifications of a voter and why they have been challenged. If the person challenged is qualified, and the challenge is not withdrawn, the person should be allowed to vote a provisional ballot which is then received and placed in an envelope. The manager should then write the name of the person and the name of the challenger on the envelope.
The provisional votes are kept separately and not counted but turned over by the poll managers to the Commissioners of the Election or other authority having supervision of the election. At the meeting scheduled following the election, the state officers having supervision of the election will hear all objections to these votes from any person who appears to offer evidence to sustain an objection made at the polls.

If the challenger appears at the meeting and produces witnesses or evidence in support of the challenge, the authority in charge must proceed to hear and determine the question. The authority’s decision is final.

If no one appears to sustain the objection or if the authority found that the challenge was unsubstantiated, the ballot is no longer provisional and is removed from the envelope, mingled, and counted and the totals will be added to the previously counted regular ballot totals.

21. Additional COVID-19 Voting Information

Poll managers will receive special Covid-19 training on applying social distancing and maintaining sanitary conditions in the polling place.

Poll managers are being provided:

- Masks, face shields and gloves.
- Sneeze guards for check-in stations.
- Sanitizing wipes for frequent cleaning of common surfaces.
- Check-in stations and voting equipment will be spaced at least six feet apart.

What Can Voters Do?

- Vote absentee by mail to avoid COVID-19 exposure and delays at the polls.
- To vote absentee in person:
  - Visit your county voter registration office or satellite absentee location. Get dates, times, and locations at scVOTES.org.
- If voting in person at the voter’s polling place on Election Day, the voter should confirm their polling place location at SCVOTES.org before going to the polls. Some polling places will be relocated due to COVID-19.
- When voting in person:
  - Voters will be provided disposable cotton swabs for making selections on the touchscreen.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided for voters and poll managers.
- Voters should bring their Photo ID (or voter registration card if you do not have a Photo ID) to hold up for viewing during check in.
  - Voters should wear a protective mask if they have one and bring their own pens.
for signing the poll list.

- Voters should practice social distancing by spacing themselves at least six feet apart from others in and around the poll.
17 S.C. Code 1976 § 7-7-440(B).
18 S.C. Code 1976 §§ 7-5-150, 7-7-440(B).
26 S.C. Code 1976 § 7-5-120.