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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NOTICE RE COVID-19 RELATED CHANGES


A July 20, 2020 Update from the Vermont Secretary of State is Attached to these FAQs

1. Am I registered to vote?

You can determine whether a voter is registered to vote by checking the Vermont Secretary of State’s website “My Voter Page” (https://mvp.sec.state.vt.us/).

2. Where do I vote?
You can determine a voter’s proper polling place by checking the Vermont Secretary of State’s website, “My Voter Page” (https://mvp.sec.state.vt.us/). 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?

Polls will open on Election Day between 5:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m., depending on the town. All polling places will close at 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 the time it is supposed to open, advise voters to stay at the polling location and contact your hotline captain/command center. A voter in line by 7:00 p.m. has a right to vote. If you are a hotline volunteer or a field volunteer and a polling place closes before 7:00 p.m. or prohibits voters who were in line before 7:00 p.m. from voting, advise voters to stay at the polling location and contact your hotline captain/command center.

In Vermont, early voting is also available – please see Question #16.

4. When is/was the voter registration deadline?

There is no deadline: Voters may register to vote on any day up to and including the day of election at the polling place, provided they meet the eligibility requirements for voting.

Registration is available during all normal business hours of the voter’s town or city clerk’s office on days preceding the election and during polling hours on Election Day. Voters can find contact information for their town or city clerk’s office on the Secretary of State’s website “Guide to Vermont’s Town Clerks, Treasurers & County Clerks” (https://www.sec.state.vt.us/media/878762/townclerkguide.pdf).

Voters may also register online until Election Day on the Secretary of State’s website “Online Voter Registration System” (https://www.olvr.sec.state.vt.us/). However, if a voter registers online the day before the election or on Election Day, the voter’s application may not be processed in time and the voter may be asked to fill out an application at the polling place. For the 8/11/2020 primary election, the last day to register online and be sure the voter will be listed on the checklist at their polling place is Friday, August 7, 2020.

Additionally, voters may register to vote simultaneously with their application for, or renewal of, a driver’s license or nondriver identification card; by completing a voter registration application at a voter registration agency; or by mailing a completed application form to the office of the clerk of the town in which the voter is a resident.

5. Can I vote without providing identification?

Yes. Voters who registered when they renewed their driver’s license or who registered as part of a voter registration drive will not be required to show identification. Only first-time voters who registered by mail or online and did not provide a copy of identification along with their registration have to show identification in order to vote.

Acceptable forms of identification are:
  - A valid photo identification (driver’s license or passport);
  - A copy of a current utility bill;

2
Voters may still vote by provisional ballot even if they do not have identification with them; however, voters are encouraged to bring identification to the polling place, if possible, and not cast a provisional ballot. If a voter votes by a provisional ballot, he/she will only be able to cast a vote for federal elections. The ballot will only be counted if the town clerk determines after the close of polls that the voter meets all eligibility requirements. If the clerk denies the application, the clerk will inform the voter that the application has been denied.  

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

If a voter has moved within the same town, he/she should notify the town clerk of his/her new address to update his/her registration records. If a voter has moved to a different town, he/she must re-register to vote in the town of his/her new address.

If a voter did not update his/her registration information, the answer to this question depends on where the voter moved. Refer to the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moved within the area covered by the same polling place</th>
<th>Moved to an area covered by a different polling place but within the same municipality</th>
<th>Moved to a different municipality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If the voter registration records indicate that a voter has moved from an address in the area covered by the same polling place, the voter shall be permitted to vote at that polling place if the voter makes an oral or written affirmation that he/she continues to reside in the area covered by that polling place. To determine the relevant polling place, see the Vermont Secretary of State’s website “My Voter Page” from Question #2.</td>
<td>If the voter has moved within the same municipality, but is covered by a different polling place, the voter should go to the polling place location that corresponds to their new residence where he/she can vote a regular ballot. The voter must provide an affirmation at the appropriate polling place before an election official that the voter has moved within the same municipality and is voting at the correct polling place.</td>
<td>If the voter has moved to a different municipality, the voter retains the right to vote at the polling place of the voter’s former residence for up to 17 days following the move. After 17 days following the move to a new municipality, the voter must register to vote in the municipality of his/her new address and vote at the polling place of their new residence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Voters should immediately notify the election officials if the voting equipment breaks down while the polls are open. Voters should ask to vote by a back-up paper ballot. If no paper ballots are available, voters may also ask to vote by a provisional ballot.

If you are a hotline volunteer and learn of equipment not working properly at a polling place, notify your hotline captain, who will immediately contact a Board of Civil Authority member present at the polling place or the town clerk to report the problem.
If you are a field volunteer at a polling place and the equipment is not working properly, notify the command center, which will immediately contact a Board of Civil Authority member present at the polling place or the town clerk to report the problem.

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 in his/her assigned precinct. If a voter chooses to vote outside of his/her assigned precinct, his/her ballot will not be counted. If you are a hotline volunteer or a field volunteer, you should tell the voter to go to his/her assigned polling place.

9. My name isn’t popping up on the list of registered voters (i.e., checklist) – what should I do?

If for any reason a voter’s name is not on the list of registered voters when he/she arrives at the polls, the voter can simply fill out a registration form and vote that day.

A voter’s name can be removed from the list of registered voters in a number of circumstances, including the following: a voter becomes a resident of another political subdivision and is placed on their checklist; a voter dies; or a voter has filed a written request that his/her name be stricken from the checklist. Any person whose name has been removed from the checklist may appeal to any superior judge in the county or district in which the applicant claims to be resident. If there is no superior judge available in the county or district, the appeal may be taken to any superior judge.

Note that you can take steps to help to determine why a voter’s name is not popping up 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 that address in the registration lookup tool (see Question #1 and Question #6).
- 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, including 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?

Remember, however, that the best solution if a voter’s name is not on the checklist is to simply have the voter fill out a registration form and vote that day.

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

Yes. Any person may register to vote in the town of his/her residence who on Election Day is a citizen of the United States, a resident of Vermont, has taken the voter’s oath, and is at least 18 years old. Even currently-incarcerated individuals may vote, and may register in the town in which they resided before being incarcerated.
11. I have been offered a provisional ballot. What should I do?

Inquire why the voter was offered a provisional ballot; provisional ballots are very rare in Vermont.

A provisional ballot should be a last resort. However, if the voter needs to cast a provisional ballot, the voter must complete the attestation on the envelope, seal the envelope, and deposit it in a ballot box marked for the receipt of provisional ballots. The town clerk will notify the voter within two days after the close of the polls whether the voter’s ballot was counted.

If the voter casts a provisional ballot, he/she should ask the poll worker if any additional steps are needed to make sure the ballot is counted.

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

Yes. If you attend college in Vermont, you may register and vote where you go to school provided that you consider yourself a resident of Vermont. A resident is a person who is domiciled in the town, as evidenced by an intent to maintain a principal dwelling place in the town indefinitely and to return there if temporarily absent. Students are held to the same eligibility requirements as any other voter in the jurisdiction.

College students can register to vote in either their hometown or college town, but cannot register in both locations. College students who are already registered in their hometowns can re-register in their college towns. Once they do this, the clerks in their hometowns will be notified and will remove their names from the voter checklist so they will be registered to vote in only one location.

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

Yes. All polling places in Vermont should be accessible to people with disabilities. If voters have unique accessibility needs, they should give the town clerk reasonable advance notice so that steps can be taken to accommodate their needs.

A voter may also request that an election official bring the ballot to his/her car if it is next to the polling location if he/she is elderly or disabled.

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 voting is entitled to have some person of his/her 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 his/her choices on the ballot. Alternatively, a voter can receive assistance from two election officials of different party affiliations.

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

Yes. A voter who needs assistance to register a vote on a machine shall be assisted by a person of the voter’s choice, other than the voter’s employer, an agent of the employer, or an officer or agent of the voter’s union. Alternatively, a voter can receive help from two election officials of different party affiliations.
16. Can I vote absentee or vote in person before Election Day?

In Vermont, voters can vote early in person at the town clerk’s office with which they are registered to vote at any time from the date on which ballots are available (which shall be no later than 45 days before the Election Day) until the day before the Election Day. This means in-person early voting for the 2020 statewide primary election began on June 29, 2020.

Further, a voter can vote absentee at any time from the date on which ballots are available (which shall be no later than 45 days before the Election Day). Please note that all registered voters were mailed an Early Voter Absentee Ballot application and information about absentee voting by the Secretary of State’s office for the August 11, 2020 statewide primary.

If a voter did not receive an absentee ballot application for the August 11, 2020 primary election from the Secretary of State, the voter may request an Early Voter Absentee Ballot until 5:00 p.m. (or by the time of closing of the town clerk’s office) on the day before the Election Day (i.e., on Monday, August 10, 2020 for the statewide primary). A voter can apply for an Early Voter Absentee Ballot by asking for it in person at his/her town clerk’s office, by telephone, online, or by mail. All Early Voter Absentee Ballots must be received by the town clerk’s office before the close of the office on the day before the election, or at the polling place before 7 p.m. on the day of the election, in order to be counted.

If a voter is an early or absentee voter due to illness or physical disability, an Early Voter Absentee Ballot will be delivered to the voter by two justices of the peace, unless the voter has requested that the Early Voter Absentee Ballot be mailed to him/her.

**For the November 3, 2020 general election only**, the Secretary of State will issue absentee ballots to all registered voters in the state. If a voter does not receive an absentee ballot from the Secretary of State, voters should contact their town clerk’s office for further information about obtaining an absentee ballot. Generally, the deadline for requesting an absentee ballot is by 5:00 p.m. or the closing time of the town clerk’s office the day before the election.

For more information on early in-person voting and absentee voting in Vermont, see the Secretary of State’s “Absentee Voting” web page (https://sos.vermont.gov/elections/voters/early-absentee-voting).

For COVID-19 related updates and changes, please see: https://sos.vermont.gov/elections/about/covid-19-response/.

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

Ordinarily, voters must bring their absentee ballot to the polling place and surrender it at the poll in order to vote in person on Election Day if they requested and received the absentee ballot.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, however, voters will not be required to bring their absentee ballot with them to the polls if they wish to vote in person for the August 11, 2020 and November 3, 2020 elections only. The voter will be required to sign an affidavit that they have not previously returned the ballot sent to them or cast any other ballot. But if the voter has already submitted their Early Voter Absentee Ballot then they will not be allowed to vote at the polls. Even if that ballot has not yet been counted, it is considered a voted ballot and cannot be retracted.

If you have lost your Early Voter Absentee Ballot after you received it or you never received an Early Voter Absentee Ballot that was mailed to you, you can sign an affidavit form stating that you do not have your
Early Voter Absentee Ballot to return and the town clerk can give you a replacement ballot to vote in person.  

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

Yes. Vermont instituted Same Day Registration on January 1, 2017. On the day of election, the voter may submit an application for addition to the checklist to the presiding officer at the polling place of the town in which the person seeks to register. The presiding officer or his/her designated election official will review all applications submitted at the polling place and will approve those applications that meet the eligibility requirements. (A voter is eligible to vote in the town of his/her residence if he/she is a citizen of the United States, is a resident of the state of Vermont, has taken the voter’s oath, and is 18 years of age or more.)  

Upon approval, the applicant’s name shall be added to the checklist at the polling place, and the applicant can vote. The town clerk will add the information in the application to the statewide voter checklist within five business days of the day of the election.  

If the presiding officer or the designated election official cannot determine that an applicant meets the eligibility requirements, the presiding officer will immediately refer the application to any members of the board of civil authority present at the polling place who will meet and determine whether the applicant meets the eligibility requirements. If the board rejects an applicant, it will notify him/her at the polling place.  

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

Vermont does not allow campaigning inside of polling places. The presiding officer will ensure that during polling hours no campaign literature, stickers, buttons, name stamps, information on write-in candidates, or other political materials are displayed or handed out. Within the polling place, no one can distribute election materials or solicit voters regarding an item or candidate on the ballot or otherwise campaign. On the walks and driveways leading to the polling place, no one can physically interfere with the progress of a voter to and from the polling place.  

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

If someone is formally challenging a voter’s right to vote, the voter should find a member of the board of civil authority present at the polling place.  

Each organized political party, each candidate on the ballot not representing an organized political party, and each committee supporting or opposing any question on the ballot can have two representatives for each voting district, in a polling place but outside the guardrail, for the purpose of observing the voting process and challenging the right of any person to vote. The representatives are not permitted to interfere with the orderly conduct of the election, but the representatives do have the right to hear or see the name of a person seeking to vote and to make an immediate challenge to a person's right to vote on the grounds that
he/she is not the person whose name appears on the checklist or that he/she previously voted in the same election.

If a challenge is issued, the members of the board of civil authority in the polling place will immediately meet, informally hear the facts, and decide whether the challenge should be sustained. If the board overrules the challenge, the person shall immediately be admitted within the guardrail and permitted to vote. If the board sustains the challenge, the person shall not be admitted unless, before the polls close, he/she obtains a court order directing that he/she be permitted to vote.  

21. Can I vote in the statewide primary election?

The Vermont statewide primary is “open”, meaning that voters need not be registered members of the party holding the primary to vote in the primary. All registered voters can vote in the primary election—but can only vote on one ballot. Voters will be given a ballot for each of the major parties. Voters mark one of the ballots and put the remaining unvoted ballots into a discard bin. Which ballot voters chose to vote is private and not recorded (except during the presidential primary, where voters must publicly take one ballot or the other, and their choice is recorded on the entrance checklist).
1 17 V.S.A. §2561.
2 17 V.S.A. §2561.
3 17 V.S.A. §2144.
4 17 V.S.A. §2144a; 17 V.S.A. §2145a.
5 17 V.S.A. §2563.
6 17 V.S.A. §§2555, 2557.
7 17 V.S.A. §2149.
8 17 V.S.A. §2122.
9 17 V.S.A. §2122.
10 17 V.S.A. §2150.
11 17 V.S.A. §2148.
12 17 V.S.A. §2121.
13 17 V.S.A. §2556(b).
14 17 V.S.A. §2557.
15 17 V.S.A. §2122.
16 17 V.S.A. §2502(b).
17 17 V.S.A. §2502(b).
18 17 V.S.A. §2569.
19 17 V.S.A. §2569.
21 17 V.S.A. §2531

22 17 V.S.A. §2538.
24 17 V.S.A. §2548.
25 17 V.S.A. §2548.
26 17 V.S.A. §2144.
27 17 V.S.A. §2508.
28 17 V.S.A. §2564.
29 17 V.S.A. §§2363, 2704.
30 Do I have to register as a Democrat, Republican, Independent or some other party in Vermont?