

**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.

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

#### REGISTERING TO VOTE

1. **STATUS:** [Am I registered to vote?](#)
2. **HOW:** [How do I register to vote? What if I don't have access to a computer and/or printer?](#)
3. **IDENTIFICATION:** [What ID is required to register to vote?](#)
4. **DEADLINES:** [When is/was the voter registration deadline? Are there different deadlines whether I register by mail, in-person, online or on Election Day?](#)
5. **SAME DAY:** [Does my state have Same Day Registration? If so, what is the process?](#)
6. **PERMANENT MOVE:** [I have moved permanently and I didn't update my voter registration, can I vote?](#)
7. **TEMPORARY MOVE:** [I have moved temporarily due to COVID-19 or some other reason. Where can I vote?](#)
8. **STUDENT:** [I am a college student. Can I register to vote where I go to school? What if I am taking classes remotely? Where can I vote?](#)
9. **LIVING ABROAD:** [I am living abroad and/or serving in the military. How can I register and/or vote?](#)
10. **CRIMINAL CONVICTION:** [I have a criminal conviction. Can I vote?](#)
11. **INCARCERATED:** [I am currently in jail. Can I vote?](#)
12. **NOT ON ROLLS AT MY POLLING PLACE:** [I am at my polling place and am not on the voter registration roll. Can I vote where I am?](#)
13. **THOUGHT WAS REGISTERED:** [My name isn't on the voter registration roll but I thought I was registered. What do I do?](#)

#### HOW TO VOTE: EARLY VOTING

14. **AVAILABILITY:** [Is there early voting in my state \(whether called early voting or in person absentee voting\)? When is it?](#)
15. **ELIGIBILITY:** [Do I have to have a reason to vote early?](#)
16. **WHEN:** [When do the polls open/close during early voting?](#)
17. **WHERE:** [Where do I vote during early voting?](#)
18. **IDENTIFICATION:** [What identification is required for early voting? Can I vote without providing identification?](#)

#### HOW TO VOTE: ABSENTEE and/or VOTE BY MAIL

19. **AUTOMATIC:** [Do I have to request an absentee ballot or will my state mail me one automatically?](#)
20. **APPLICATION DEADLINE:** [What is the deadline for requesting an absentee ballot?](#)
21. **APPLICATION RETURN:** [Where and/or how can I return my absentee ballot application? Can someone return it for me?](#)

22. **APPLICATION - DIDN'T REQUEST IN TIME:** [What if I have not requested an absentee ballot by the deadline?](#)
23. **ELIGIBILITY:** [Do I have to have a specific reason for requesting to vote absentee whether in person or by mail-in or drop off ballot?](#)
24. **STATUS OF APPLICATION AND/OR BALLOT:** [How can I check the status of my application and/or absentee ballot?](#)
25. **APPLICATION OR BALLOT REJECTED:** [I learned my absentee ballot application and/or ballot was rejected. What can I do to fix any errors or get another one?](#)
26. **COMPLETING BALLOT:** [How do I complete the absentee ballot? Are there any identification requirements?](#)
27. **LOST OR SPOILED:** [What if I lost my absentee ballot or it is spoiled or I received an incorrect one?](#)
28. **NON-RECEIPT OF BALLOT:** [What if I requested an absentee ballot but have not received it? Can I do anything?](#)
29. **IN PERSON OPTION:** [What if I requested an absentee ballot but I want to vote in person on Election Day?](#)
30. **BALLOT DEADLINES:** [What is the deadline for the \*\*ballot\*\* to be mailed and/or received by, including dropping it off in person?](#)
31. **BALLOT DROP OF LOCATIONS:** [What are the locations for dropping off a ballot \(instead of mailing it\)?](#)
32. **ASSISTANCE DROPPING OFF:** [Can someone else drop off my completed ballot for me?](#)
33. **IN PERSON ABSENTEE:** [Where do I vote in-person absentee? When can I do this?](#)

## HOW TO VOTE: ELECTION DAY

34. **HOURS:** [When do the polls open/close on Election Day? What if the polls are closing but I'm in line?](#)
35. **POLLING LOCATION:** [Where do I vote on Election Day?](#)
36. **IDENTIFICATION:** [What identification is required to vote? Can I vote without providing identification?](#)

## POLLING PLACE ISSUES

37. **POLLING PLACE NOT OPEN:** [The polling place is not open. What do I do?](#)
38. **LONG LINES:** [There are long lines at the polling place. What do I do? What if the polls are closing while I'm in line?](#)
39. **EQUIPMENT FAILURE:** [What should I do if there are equipment problems at my precinct?](#)
40. **NO PPE/COVID:** [What if my polling is not enforcing COVID-19 precautions or has run out of supplies?](#)
41. **EQUIPMENT ASSISTANCE:** [I don't know how to use the voting equipment. Can I get help?](#)
42. **PHYSICAL DISABILITY:** [I have a physical disability and need assistance. Will my polling place be accessible?](#)
43. **READING/LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE:** [I am blind, have a physical disability, or cannot read English and require assistance in order to vote. Can I get assistance at the polls?](#)
44. **CURBSIDE VOTING:** [When can I request curbside voting?](#)
45. **CAMPAIGNING:** [What rules apply to people campaigning or "hanging around" my polling place? Can people approach me?](#)
46. **CHALLENGE:** [Someone is formally challenging my vote. What do I do?](#)
47. **POLICE/MILITARY PRESENCE:** [There are police/members of the military at the polling place. Is this okay? What do I do?](#)
48. **PROVISIONAL BALLOT:** [I have been offered a provisional ballot. What should I do?](#)

## QUESTIONS

49. [Who should I contact if I have questions about any of the above?](#)

---

## REGISTERING TO VOTE

---

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

Voters can determine whether they are registered to vote by checking the Iowa Secretary of State's website (<https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/voterreg/regtovote/search.aspx>).

### 2. HOW: How do I register to vote? What if I don't have access to a computer and/or printer?

The pre-registration deadline is 10 days before the General Election (**October 24, 2020** for the 2020 General Election). The commissioner's office shall be open from 8:00 am until at least 5:00 pm on the day registration closes.

A registration form submitted by mail will be accepted either if it is post-marked by 15 days before Election Day (by October 19, 2020) or if it is received no later than 5:00 p.m. on the day registration closes (**October 24, 2020**).<sup>i</sup>

**Iowa also provides same-day registration.** A voter who has not registered may register **on Election Day** by appearing at the precinct in which the voter resides and completing a voter registration application, making a written oath, and providing proof of identity and residence. If a person does not have proof of identity and residence, a person wishing to vote may establish identity and residency by written oath of a person who is registered to vote in the precinct.<sup>ii</sup>

### 3. IDENTIFICATION: What ID is required to register to vote?

The Iowa voter registration form calls for an Iowa driver's license number, an Iowa non-operator ID number, or the last four digits of a voter's social security number. An individual who does not have any of those items cannot register online and will be asked to provide additional documentation to the county auditor.

If registering on Election Day, a voter must prove their identity and residence. The easiest way to do this is with a valid Iowa driver's license with your current address printed on it. Other options include:

#### **Proof of ID**

If you do not have an Iowa driver's license, you may use a photo ID that is current, valid, and contain an expiration date. The following are acceptable IDs:

- Iowa non-driver ID card
- Out-of-state driver's license or non-driver ID card
- U.S. passport
- U.S. military ID
- ID card issued by employer
- Student ID issued by Iowa high school or college
- Tribal ID

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

### **Proof of Residence**

If your photo ID does not contain your current address, you may use another document to prove where you live if it contains your name and current address. The following are acceptable proofs of residence:

- Residential lease
- Utility bill (including a cell phone bill)
- Bank statement
- Paycheck
- Government check or other government document

### **Attester**

If you cannot prove who you are and where you live with the documents listed above, a registered voter from your precinct may attest for you. Both you and the attester will be required to sign an oath swearing the statements being made are true.

#### **4. DEADLINES: When is/was the voter registration deadline? Are there different deadlines whether I register by mail, in-person, online or on Election Day?**

The pre-registration deadline is 10 days before the General Election (October 24 for the 2020 General Election). The commissioner's office shall be open from 8:00 am until at least 5:00 pm on the day registration closes. A registration form submitted by mail will be accepted either if it is post-marked by 15 days before Election Day (by October 19, 2020) or if it is received no later than 5:00 p.m. on the day registration closes (October 24, 2020).<sup>iii</sup>

**Iowa also provides same-day registration.** A voter who has not registered may register on Election Day by appearing at the precinct in which the voter resides and completing a voter registration application, making a written oath, and providing proof of identity and residence. If a person does not have proof of identity and residence, a person wishing to vote may establish identity and residency by written oath of a person who is registered to vote in the precinct.<sup>iv</sup>

#### **5. SAME DAY: Does my state have Same Day Registration (i.e. I can register to vote the same day I vote)? If so, what is the process?**

A voter who has not registered may register on Election Day by appearing at the precinct in which the voter resides and completing a voter registration application, making a written oath, and providing proof of identity and residence. Proof of identity includes an Iowa driver's license or ID, U.S. Passport, Tribal ID, Military ID, Veteran's ID, or Iowa Voter ID card.

Note, If your photo ID does not contain your current address, you may use another document to prove where you live if it contains your name and current address. The following are acceptable proofs of residence:

- Residential lease
- Utility bill (including a cell phone bill)
- Bank statement
- Paycheck
- Government check or other government document

If a person does not have proof of identity and residence, a person wishing to vote may establish identity and residency by written oath of a person who is registered to vote in the precinct.<sup>v</sup>

**6. PERMANENT MOVE: I have moved permanently and I didn't update my voter registration, can I vote?**

YES. A voter who moved and did not update their registration may register on Election Day and cast a ballot. At the polling place, the voter must provide ID and proof of residence. **See Question #3 for details.** An individual is eligible to vote in Iowa *even if* he or she moves to Iowa *on Election Day* so long as the voter is (1) a U.S. Citizen, (2) an Iowa resident, and (3) at least 17 years old as long as they will be 18 at the time of the election; and so long as the voter is NOT (1) a convicted felon [unless voting rights were restored], (2) judged mentally incompetent to vote, or (3) claims the right to vote in any other place. State law does not specify a minimum length of residency. No matter where a voter moved from, if he or she has moved to become the resident of an Iowa address, he or she can register on Election Day and cast a ballot.

**7. TEMPORARY MOVE: I have moved temporarily due to Covid-19 or some other reason. Where can I vote?**

Individuals cannot vote from a temporary address. Individuals must vote from where they have residency (either in person or by mail).

**8. STUDENT: I am a college student. Can I register to vote where I go to school? What if I am taking classes remotely? Where can I vote?**

Yes. A student may choose to register to vote at the student's home address or at the address the student resides at or near the school the student attends. The student may only register at one of the two locations.<sup>vi</sup> The student may pre-register to vote by completing a voter registration form and returning it to the student's county auditor's office. The student may vote by an absentee ballot in three separate ways: by mail, in person, or at a satellite voting location.

(<https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/voterinformation/collegestudents.html>).

An individual who is taking classes remotely must determine where he or she is a "resident." An individual whose schooling is fully remote will have a hard time defining their residence as the campus if he is not physically there.

**9. LIVING ABROAD: I am living abroad and/or am serving in the military. How can I register and/or vote?**

Iowa voters living abroad can register to vote and request an absentee ballot by completing a federal postcard application (FPCA). Voters can return their FPCA to the [county auditor](#) in the county where they claim Iowa residence or email it to [uocava@sos.iowa.gov](mailto:uocava@sos.iowa.gov)

The deadline to request the ballot by email or fax is the Monday before the election.

Though federal law (the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)) says voters can request a ballot by mail through the day before the election, you **MUST** request your ballot with enough time to return the ballot on time.

**All absentee ballots MUST be postmarked by the Monday before Election Day or earlier and MUST be received by the county auditor before the polls close on Election Day.**

**10. CRIMINAL CONVICTION: I have a criminal conviction. Can I vote?**

Misdemeanor convictions have no effect on voting rights.

Until very recently, in Iowa a person's voter registration was cancelled if the person is convicted of a felony. However, on August 5, 2020, the Governor issued an executive order ending Iowa's policy of permanent disenfranchisement for everyone with a felony conviction except for felony homicide offenses. The executive order automatically and prospectively restores voting rights to most Iowans who have completed their terms of incarceration, probation, parole, or special sentence.<sup>vii</sup> Individuals whose rights were restored by the executive order will need to register to vote at their current residential addresses.

An individual whose rights have not been automatically restored (i.e. a person convicted of violating chapter 707 of the Iowa Code "Homicide and Related Crimes") may apply for restoration of voting rights once the person has discharged probation and parole and completed repayment of court costs, restitution, and fines or must be on a payment plan.<sup>viii</sup>

**11. INCARCERATED: I am currently in jail. Can I vote?**

If you were convicted of a non-aggravated misdemeanor, you can vote, but you have to vote by absentee ballot if you are still in jail.<sup>ix</sup> Once you have been released, you can vote at your local polling site. If you were convicted of an aggravated misdemeanor, the process is the same as if you were convicted of a state felony. If you are in jail for a felony you cannot vote until you complete all terms of your sentence.

**12. NOT ON ROLLS AT POLLING PLACE: I am at my polling place and am not on the voter registration roll. Can I vote where I am?**

The voter should vote in the precinct where the voter resides. A voter whose name does not appear on the rolls at the precinct cannot vote unless (1) the voter affirms that the voter is currently registered in the county and presents proof of identity and residence, or (2) the voter indicates the voter is not registered, in which case the voter can use Same Day Registration to cast a ballot.<sup>x</sup>

Voters whose names are not on the rolls at the precinct and who do not have the necessary documentation may request provisional ballots.<sup>xi</sup> However, if a voter casts a provisional ballot in a precinct where they are not registered, their vote will not be counted.<sup>xii</sup>

Note that you can take steps to help determine why a voter's name is not on the rolls at the precinct. (See next Question.)

**13. THOUGHT WAS REGISTERED: My name isn't on the voter registration roll but I thought I was registered. Could it have been removed? What do I do?**

A person who has been convicted of a felony or who is declared incompetent to vote is disqualified from registering to vote unless their rights have been restored.<sup>xiii</sup>

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

A person who has claimed the right to vote in any other place is considered to have revoked the previous voter registration.<sup>xiv</sup>

Any voter whose name was removed from the voter registration list on the basis of a determination of ineligibility who subsequently becomes eligible to vote may register to vote on Election Day in person at the polling place for the precinct in which the individual maintains residence. The voter must complete a registration application, make an oath, and provide proof of identity and residence.<sup>xv</sup>

If an individual is not on the list of registered voters, they can request a provisional ballot.

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 (<https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/voterreg/regtovote/search.aspx>) to make sure they are 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 [Questions #1](#) and [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? The voter has the option to register to vote at their polling place on Election Day, provided they bring the requisite identification that shows identity and proof of residence, and fill out the registration form and oath. (See [Question #18.](#))

---

## HOW TO VOTE: EARLY VOTING

---

### **14. AVAILABILITY: Is there early voting in my state (whether called early voting or in person absentee voting)? When is it?**

Iowa voters can vote early in person at the county auditor's office before Election Day through a process called absentee in-person voting. The period for absentee in-person voting runs from Monday, October 5, 2020 to Monday, November 2, 2020, but dates and hours may vary based on where you live. For more information, voters should check with the county auditor's office (<https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/auditors/auditorslist.html>).

Iowa also offers absentee voting by mail. A registered voter may make written application to their County Auditor for an absentee ballot. A written application for a mailed absentee ballot must be received by the voter's County Auditor no later than 5:00 p.m. 10 days before a General Election.



**15. ELIGIBILITY: Do I have to have a reason to vote early?**

Iowa offers no-excuses early (in person absentee) voting.<sup>xvi</sup>

**16. WHEN: When do the polls open/close during early voting?**

The period for absentee in-person voting runs from Monday, October 5, 2020 to Monday, November 2, 2020, but dates and hours may vary based on where you live. For more information, voters should check with the county auditor's office (<https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/auditors/auditorslist.html>).

**17. WHERE: Where do I vote during early voting?**

Early voting takes place at the county auditor's office (<https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/auditors/auditorslist.html>).

**18. IDENTIFICATION: What identification is required for early voting? Can I vote without providing identification?**

YES. Voters in Iowa are required to show an ID when early voting absentee in-person and at the polls on Election Day.

- Iowa Voter Identification Card
- Iowa Driver's License
- Iowa Non-Operator ID
- U.S. Military ID or Veteran ID
- U.S. Passport
- Tribal ID Card/Document

If your photo ID does not contain your current address, you may use another document to prove where you live if it contains your name and current address. The following are acceptable proofs of residence:

- Residential lease
- Utility bill (including a cell phone bill)
- Bank statement
- Paycheck
- Government check or other government document

A voter without one of the above forms of ID may have the voter's identity attested to by another registered voter in the precinct and prove residence using one of the above residence documents.



---

## HOW TO VOTE: ABSENTEE AND/OR VOTE BY MAIL

---

### **19. AUTOMATIC: Do I have to request an absentee ballot or will my state mail me one automatically? How do I request one?**

Voters must request an absentee ballot.

Registered voters can request to receive an absentee ballot by mail by completing an absentee ballot request form and returning the original signed form to the county auditor. Request forms are available at <https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/electioninfo/absenteeinfo.html>. The request form must be received in the county auditor's office by 5:00 p.m. on October 24, 2020.<sup>xvii</sup>

In the alternative, voters may use in person absentee voting by going to their county auditor's office and signing a written request that includes:

- Name and date of birth
- Registration address
- Mailing address, if different from your registration address
- Signature
- Election name or date of election
- Driver's License number/non-operator's ID number or their Voter ID PIN (*found on Voter ID Card of those who do not have an Iowa Driver's License or Non-Operator ID*) on the Absentee Ballot Request form.

### **20. APPLICATION DEADLINE: What is the deadline for requesting an absentee ballot?**

The request to vote absentee by mail in ballot must be received in the county auditor's office by 5:00 p.m. on October 24, 2020.<sup>xviii</sup>

In the alternative, voters may use in person absentee voting by going to their county auditor's office and signing a written request that includes:

- Name and date of birth
- Registration address
- Mailing address, if different from your registration address
- Signature
- Election name or date of election
- Driver's License number/non-operator's ID number or their Voter ID PIN (*found on Voter ID Card of those who do not have an Iowa Driver's License or Non-Operator ID*) on the Absentee Ballot Request form.

A voter can vote in-person absentee October 5 through November 2, 2020. Hours vary by county.

**21. APPLICATION RETURN: Where and/or how can I return my absentee ballot application? Can someone return it for me?**

You can return your voted absentee ballot by mail. Absentee ballots received after the polls close must have been postmarked by the Monday before Election Day and received in the county auditor's office no later than noon on the Monday following Election Day to be counted.<sup>xix</sup> See <https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/electioninfo/absenteemail.html>.

Voters can vote absentee in person starting 29 days prior to the election at their county auditor's offices.<sup>xx</sup> See <https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/electioninfo/absenteeinperson.html>. County auditor information is available at: <https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/auditors/auditorslist.html>. In-person absentee voting is not available on Election Day at the auditor's office unless the polls open at noon. If the polls open at noon, you may cast an absentee ballot at the county auditor's office from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on Election Day.

At any time between the deadline for registration and Election Day, a person who appears in person at an absentee voting station or whose ballot is delivered to a health care facility may register to vote and vote an absentee ballot.<sup>xxi</sup>

**22. DIDN'T REQUEST IN TIME: What if I have not requested an absentee ballot by the deadline?**

A voter may still proceed to the county auditor's office to receive and vote an in-person absentee ballot.

**23. ELIGIBILITY: Do I have to have a specific reason for requesting to vote by absentee ballot?**

No. Iowa offers no-excuses absentee voting.

**24. STATUS OF APPLICATION AND/OR BALLOT: How can I check the status of my application and/or absentee ballot?**

You may track your absentee ballot (and your application) by visiting <https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/absenteeballotstatus/absentee/search> or by contacting your county auditor (<https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/auditors/auditorslist.html>).

**25. APPLICATION AND/OR BALLOT REJECTED: I learned my absentee ballot application and/or ballot was rejected. What can I do to fix any errors or get another one?**

Contact your county auditor (<https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/auditors/auditorslist.html>) to determine why the request/ballot was rejected and to see if the error can be remedied.

**26. COMPLETING BALLOT: How do I complete the absentee ballot? Are there any identification requirements?**

In order to obtain a vote-by-mail absentee ballot, a voter will need to supply the following information:

- Date of birth
- Iowa residential address
- Voter Verification Number (ID Number)
  - Iowa Driver's License or Non-Operator ID Number **OR**
  - Four digit Voter PIN located on the voter's Iowa Voter ID Card
  - Any voter may request an Iowa Voter ID Card by contacting their County Auditor's Office
- The name or date of the election for which you are requesting an absentee ballot
- Party affiliation (only required for Primary Elections) which are held in even numbered years
- Signature

Similarly, an individual using early voting (in-person absentee) must show ID. The following are acceptable IDs:

- Iowa Voter Identification Card
- Iowa Driver's License
- Iowa Non-Operator ID
- U.S. Military ID or Veteran ID
- U.S. Passport
- Tribal ID Card/Document

If your photo ID does not contain your current address, you may use another document to prove where you live if it contains your name and current address. The following are acceptable proofs of residence:

- Residential lease
- Utility bill (including a cell phone bill)
- Bank statement
- Paycheck
- Government check or other government document

A voter without one of the above forms of ID may have the voter's identity attested to by another registered voter in the precinct and prove residence using one of the above residence documents.

**27. LOST OR SPOILED: What if I lost my absentee ballot or it is spoiled or I received an incorrect one?**

If you cannot vote your absentee ballot because it was damaged or destroyed or you lost it, contact your [county auditor](#) for help. There are procedures for obtaining replacement ballots.

**28. NON-RECEIPT OF BALLOT: What if I requested an absentee ballot but have not received it? Can I do anything?**

You can track your absentee ballot online by using the [Track Your Absentee Ballot](#) search. You can see the date your absentee ballot request was processed by the county auditor, the date the auditor sent your ballot, and the date the auditor received your voted ballot.

If you have questions about the information displayed in the search, please contact your [county auditor](#) for help.

**29. IN PERSON OPTION: What if I requested an absentee ballot but I want to vote in person on Election Day?**

A voter may surrender his or her absentee ballot at the appropriate polling location and cast a standard ballot in-person on Election Day. A registered voter who has requested an absentee ballot by mail but has not received it or who has not brought the ballot to the polls shall be permitted to vote in person at the polls, but will have to cast a provisional ballot.<sup>xxii</sup>

**30. BALLOT DEADLINES: What is the deadline for the ballot to be postmarked and/or received by, including dropping it off in person?**

You can return an absentee ballot by mail. Absentee ballots received by the county auditor by the time the polls close on Election Day are eligible for counting. Absentee ballots received after the polls close on Election Day must be postmarked by the Monday before Election Day (or earlier) and received no later than noon on Monday following the election.

NOTE: voted absentee ballots CANNOT be delivered to the polling place on Election Day.

If you have not returned your absentee ballot by Election Day, you have the following options:

- a) Deliver your voted absentee ballot to the county auditor's office before the polls close on Election Day, or
- b) Surrender your voted absentee ballot at the polls and vote a regular ballot, or
- c) Vote a provisional ballot at the polls if you cannot surrender your voted absentee ballot.

**31. BALLOT DROP OFF LOCATIONS: What are the locations for dropping off a completed ballot (instead of mailing it)?**

You can drop off a completed absentee ballot at the county auditor's office (<https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/auditors/auditorslist.html>). Some counties also provide drop boxes for absentee ballots. Contact your county for more details.

**32. ASSISTANCE DROPPING OFF: Can someone drop off my completed ballot for me?**

A voter can designate another person to deliver their completed absentee ballot.<sup>xxiii</sup>

**33. IN PERSON ABSENTEE: Where do I vote in-person absentee?**

Early voting takes place at the county auditor's office (<https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/auditors/auditorslist.html>).

Some counties also provide satellite locations for early in-person absentee. For more information, contact your county auditor.

---

## HOW TO VOTE: ELECTION DAY

---

### 34. HOURS: When do the polls open and close on Election Day? What if the polls are closing but I'm in line?

Polls are open from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Central Time on Election Day.<sup>xxiv</sup> A voter who is on the premises of the polling place by 9:00 p.m. must be allowed to vote.<sup>xxv</sup> **If a voter is in line they must be allowed to vote.**

**\*Note to hotline and field volunteers:** If a polling place is not open by its required opening time, advise voters to stay at the polling location and contact your hotline captain/command center.

**\*Note to hotline volunteer:** If you learn that a polling place prohibits those who were in line by 8:00 p.m. from voting, advise voters to stay at the polling location and contact your hotline captain immediately.

### 35. POLLING LOCATION: Where do I vote on Election Day?

Voters can determine their proper polling place by checking the Iowa Secretary of State's website (<https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/voterreg/pollingplace/search.aspx>). Voters who have moved recently and have not updated their voter registration should go to the polling place associated with their new address. Voters who have moved within the same county will be asked to update their registration and supply documentation showing the voter's name and address. Voters who have moved to a new county will be asked to re-register and must show a photo ID and proof of residence.<sup>xxvi</sup>

**\*Note to hotline volunteer:** Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, many polling places have been moved or consolidated. Voters should be advised to check the polling place listed on the Voter Notification Card they received from the local election authority a few days before the election.

### 36. IDENTIFICATION: What identification is required to vote on Election Day? Can I vote without providing identification?

Voters in Iowa will be asked to show one of the following forms of identification at the polls.<sup>xxvii</sup>

Acceptable forms of ID include:

- Iowa Driver's License;
- Iowa Non-Operator's ID;
- U.S. Passport;
- Tribal ID;
- Military ID;
- Veteran's ID;
- Iowa Voter ID Card.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

A voter without one of the listed forms of ID may have the voter's identity attested to by another registered voter in the precinct or may prove identity and residence using Election Day Registration documents. Voters without the necessary ID or an attester will be offered a provisional ballot and can provide ID up until the time of the county canvass of votes (Monday after Election Day for Primary and General Elections).

Note, If your photo ID does not contain your current address, you may use another document to prove where you live if it contains your name and current address. The following are acceptable proofs of residence:

- Residential lease
- Utility bill (including a cell phone bill)
- Bank statement
- Paycheck
- Government check or other government document

---

## POLLING PLACE ISSUES

---

### **37. POLLING PLACE NOT OPEN: The polling place is not open. What do I do?**

The polling location should be open at 7:00 a.m. Central Time on Election Day.<sup>xxviii</sup> If it is not, contact your county auditor.

**\*Note to hotline volunteer:** If you learn of a polling place not opening on time or is closed, notify your hotline captain immediately.

### **38. LONG LINES: There are long lines at the polling place. What do I do? What if the polls are closing while I'm in line?**

Polls are open from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Central Time on Election Day.<sup>xxix</sup> A voter who is in line MUST be allowed to vote.<sup>xxx</sup> Stay in line.

**\*Note to hotline volunteer:** If you learn of long lines, notify your hotline captain immediately. Similarly, if you learn that a polling place prohibits those who were in line by 8:00 p.m. from voting, advise voters to stay at the polling location and contact your hotline captain immediately.

### **39. EQUIPMENT FAILURE: What should I do if there are equipment problems at my precinct?**

**\*Note to hotline volunteer:** If you learn of equipment not working properly at a polling place, notify your hotline captain immediately.

Voters should immediately notify the election officers if the voting equipment breaks down while the polls are open. Extra supplies of paper ballots are required to be on hand and should be available.<sup>xxxi</sup>

**40. NO PPE/COVID: What if my polling place is not enforcing COVID-19 precautions or has run out of supplies?**

Iowa does not have a statewide mask mandate, though several municipalities (e.g. Des Moines and Cedar Rapids) do. Though the governor is encouraging people to wear masks indoors, there is no requirement to do so, absent city ordinance. It is possible there will be unmasked individuals at polling locations. Because it is unclear whether polling locations will be observing best public health practices, voters should seriously consider early voting options.

**41. EQUIPMENT ASSISTANCE: I don't know how to use the voting equipment. Can I get help?**

Yes. Polling places are required to post information explaining the voting process.<sup>xxxii</sup>

**42. PHYSICAL DISABILITY: I have a physical disability and need assistance. Will my polling place be accessible?**

Yes. Iowa state law requires all polling places to be accessible to all voters including the voting area, parking area, walkways and building entries. If a voter is unable to enter the building where the polling place is located because of a disability, two precinct election officials (one from each political party for partisan elections) must take a ballot and election supplies outside to the voter. The voter can then mark the ballot in the voter's vehicle and vote curbside.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

**43. READING/LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE: I am blind, have a physical disability, or cannot read English and require assistance in order to vote. Can I get assistance at the polls?**

Yes. If a voter needs help marking their ballot due to a physical disability or inability to read the ballot in the English language, the voter may choose any person to help them except their employer, employer's agent, or an officer/agent of their union. If the voter would like help from precinct election officials, two officials (one from each political party in partisan elections) will assist the voter. Each polling place also has a voter assist terminal. Ballots cast by voters with disabilities shall be counted in the usual manner.<sup>xxxiv</sup>

**44. CURBSIDE VOTING: When can I request curbside voting?**

If an individual is unable to go inside the polling place a team of election workers will be sent out to your car to provide curbside voting.<sup>xxxv</sup> Note, voters do not need to contact anyone ahead of time to curbside vote. The Secretary of State advises, however, that voters may want to call the county auditor ahead of time or bring someone to tell the precinct officials you wish to vote in your car.

**45. CAMPAIGNING: What rules apply to people campaigning or "hanging around" my polling place? Can people approach me?**

People are prohibited from loitering, congregating, electioneering, posting signs, treating voters, or soliciting votes on the premises or within three hundred feet of a polling place.<sup>xxxvi</sup>



#### **46. CHALLENGES: Someone is formally challenging my vote. What do I do?**

Registered voters and precinct officials may challenge any voter on their eligibility.<sup>xxxvii</sup> A precinct election official may place such person under oath and question the person as to the following:

- (1) Where the person maintains the person's home.
- (2) How long the person has maintained the person's home at such place.
- (3) If the person maintains a home at any other location.
- (4) The person's age.

The precinct election official may permit the challenger to participate in such questions.

The voter can present to the official such evidence and facts as the elector feels sustains the fact that the person is qualified to vote. Upon completion thereof, if the challenge is withdrawn, the elector may cast the vote in the usual manner. If the challenge is not withdrawn, the challenged voter must cast a provisional ballot.<sup>xxxviii</sup> The voter may present written statements or documents, supporting or opposing the counting of any provisional ballot, to the precinct election officials on Election Day, until the hour for closing the polls,<sup>xxxix</sup> or to the county auditor's office by the deadline listed on the provisional ballot envelope.<sup>xl</sup>

#### **47. POLICE/MILITARY PRESENCE: There are police/members of the military at the polling place. Is this okay? What do I do?**

**\*Note to hotline volunteer:** If you learn of police/members of the military at the polling place, notify your hotline captain immediately.

Iowa law prohibits any person from "loitering, congregating, electioneering, posting signs, treating voters, or soliciting votes, during the receiving of the ballots, either on the premises of a polling place or within three hundred feet of an outside door" of a polling place.

Iowa law provides specific limits to the presence of police officers: "Any peace officer assigned or called upon to keep order or maintain compliance with the provisions of this chapter, upon request of the commissioner or of the chairperson of the precinct election board."<sup>xli</sup>

#### **48. PROVISIONAL BALLOT: I have been offered a provisional ballot. What should I do?**

Inquire why the voter was offered a provisional ballot. A voter should be offered a provisional ballot only when:<sup>xliii</sup>

- The voter has registered by mail, is voting in an election for federal office in the county for the first time, and cannot provide picture identification and proof of residency if required;
- The voter is not registered to vote and cannot establish identity and residency as required under same-day registration;
- The voter requested an absentee ballot but cannot surrender it at the polls and a precinct election official cannot confirm whether the auditor has received the voter's absentee ballot; or
- The voter's qualifications to vote are challenged at the polls and the challenge is not withdrawn.

**Other than for these reasons, the voter should be able to cast a regular ballot.** A provisional ballot should be a last resort. However, if the voter needs to cast a provisional ballot, the voter shall be given a written notice explaining their voting rights and listing the date when the special ballot board will meet to determine if the provisional ballot will be counted.

## QUESTIONS

---

### **49. Who should I contact if I have questions about any of the above?**

There are several places to look for help. Many voter issues can be resolved by the county auditor (<https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/auditors/auditorslist.html>).

For statewide questions, the Iowa Secretary of State has launched a useful voter information portal (<https://voterready.iowa.gov/>). Other information is available from the Secretary of State's website (<https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/voterinformation/index.html>).

Finally, Iowa has launched a voter hotline (1-888-SOS-VOTE).

- 
- i Iowa Code Ann. § 48A.9.
  - ii Iowa Code Ann. § 48A.7A.
  - iii Iowa Code Ann. § 48A.9.
  - iv Iowa Code Ann. § 48A.7A.
  - v Iowa Code Ann. § 48A.7A.
  - vi Iowa Code Ann. § 48A.5A(5).
  - vii <https://governor.iowa.gov/services/voting-rights-restoration>; *See also* <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/voting-rights-restoration-efforts-iowa>
  - viii *Id.*
  - ix <http://fifthdcs.com/includes/RightToVote.pdf>
  - x Iowa Code Ann. § 49.77.3.a.
  - xi Iowa Code Ann. § 49.81.
  - xii Iowa Code Ann. §§ 50.22, 53.25.
  - xiii Iowa Code Ann. § 48A.6.
  - xiv Iowa Code Ann. § 48A.5.
  - xv Iowa Code Ann. § 48A.7A.
  - xvi Iowa Code Ann. § 53.1.
  - xvii Iowa Code Ann. § 53.2.
  - xviii Iowa Code Ann. § 53.2.
  - xix Iowa Code Ann. § 53.17.
  - xx Iowa Code Ann. § 53.10.
  - xxi Iowa Code Ann. § 48A.7A.
  - xxii Iowa Code Ann. §§ 53.19, 49.81.
  - xxiii Iowa Code Ann. § 53.17.
  - xxiv Iowa Code Ann. § 49.73.
  - xxv Iowa Code Ann. § 49.74.
  - xxvi <https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/voterinformation/updatereg.html>.
  - xxvii *See* <https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/voterinformation/voterIDfaq.html>.
  - xxviii Iowa Code Ann. § 49.73.
  - xxix Iowa Code Ann. § 49.73.
  - xxx Iowa Code Ann. § 49.74.
  - xxxi Iowa Code Ann. § 49.66.
  - xxxii Iowa Code Ann. §§ 49.70, 49.71, 49.68.
  - xxxiii Iowa Code Ann. §§ 49.21, 49.90, 49.91; *see also* <https://sos.iowa.gov/disabilities.html>.
  - xxxiv Iowa Code Ann. §§ 49.90, 49.91; *see also* <https://sos.iowa.gov/disabilities.html>.
  - xxxv <https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/voterinformation/accessibility.html>
  - xxxvi Iowa Code Ann. § 39A.4.
  - xxxvii Iowa Code Ann. § 49.79.
  - xxxviii Iowa Code Ann. § 49.79.
  - xxxix Iowa Code Ann. § 49.81.
  - xl <https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/voterinformation/edfaq.html#11>.
  - xli Iowa Code Ann. § 49.104.
  - xlii Iowa Code Ann. §§ 49.81; 53.19.