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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?

You can determine whether a voter is registered to vote by checking the Montana Secretary of State's "My Voter Page" website (<https://app.mt.gov/voterinfo/>).

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

You can register to vote by doing one of the following:

- visiting your county election office Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. and complete a registration form;
- filling out and signing a voter registration application and dropping it off at your county election office, or mailing it to the county election administrator; or
- filling out and signing a registration form when you apply for or renew your driver's license or Montana ID.¹

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

You must provide one of the following in order to register to vote:

- your Montana Driver's License or Montana ID card number;
- the last 4 digits of your social security number; or
- a copy of photo ID that shows your name, or an acceptable ID that shows your name and current address (i.e., paycheck stub, utility bill, bank statement, tribal ID, or government document).²

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?

Regular Registration

The deadline for regular voter registration for the November 3, 2020 General Election is **October 26, 2020**.³

Late Registration

If you miss this deadline, you may register and vote in the election by late registering at your county election office or designated location.⁴

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?

You may late register and vote until the polls close on Election Day (November 3, 2020), except between 12:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. the day before Election Day (November 2, 2020). You may late register at your county election office or designated locations.⁵

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

Refer to the table below. The answer to this question depends on whether the voter moved within the same county/election jurisdiction or moved to a new county.

Moved within the same precinct	Moved to a different precinct but within the same county	Moved to a different county
The voter should go to the polling place for that precinct.	The voter is entitled to cast a regular vote at the polling place, an absentee ballot, or a mail ballot in the precinct where the voter is registered. The voter may only do this for the first election after their move. Furthermore, the voter must state their new address when offering to vote, and must complete a transfer form or new registration form to make the necessary correction before being allowed to vote in a polling place election. ⁶	The voter must register in the new county of residence in order to vote. However, a voter who moved to a different county 30 days or less before an election may (i) vote in person or by absentee ballot in the precinct and county where previously registered; or (ii) update the voter's registration information and vote in the voter's new county of residence. ⁷

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

Refer to the "Moved to a different county" column in the table above.

7. 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?

If you are a student going to college in another county, you can:

- choose to vote in your county of permanent residence, either in person at the polls or by absentee ballot; or
- register in the county where you are going to college and vote in that county.

If you are an out-of-state student going to school in Montana and you have lived in Montana for at least 30 days, you may either:

- become a Montana resident and vote in the county where you are going to school; or
- vote in your original state.

You may not vote in two states.

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

The Military and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) covers the following voters:

- members of the Uniformed Services or Merchant Marine on active duty;
- spouses and dependents of a member of the Uniformed Services or Merchant Marine on active duty;
- U.S. citizens residing outside the U.S.; and
- other individuals included in the definition of “absent uniformed services voter” and “overseas voter” under Montana law.⁸

UOCAVA voters who are already registered to vote in Montana may apply for a military-overseas ballot by:

- using a regular absentee ballot application for the voter’s jurisdiction;
- using a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA);
- making a written request, which must include the voter’s birth date and signature; or
- making an electronic request that includes the voter’s birth date and affirmation of the voter’s eligibility to vote under the Monday Absent Uniformed and Overseas Voters Act.⁹

UOCAVA voters who are not yet registered may use a FPCA to simultaneously register to vote and request a military-overseas ballot.

FPCAs may be completed and submitted online with the Secretary of State’s Electronic Absentee System (EAS). The EAS is available **45 days before federal elections, through 8:00 p.m. on Election Day**. FPCAs can also be returned to your county election office via email, fax and mail. The FPCA and related information can be found on the [Federal Voting Assistance Program](#) website.¹⁰

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

Once released from the penal institution, the person is again eligible to vote. Returning citizens can vote if on probation or parole. Once released from the penal institution, a returning citizen should re-register to vote. This is because the law allows a person incarcerated for a felony to be removed from the list of registered voters.

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

A person convicted of a felony does not have a right to vote while the person is serving a sentence in a penal institution.¹¹

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?

If your name does not appear in the precinct register book and your eligibility to vote cannot otherwise be established by presenting the identification required (see question 3), you are entitled to cast a provisional ballot.¹² However, casting a provisional ballot is a last resort, and before doing so you should attempt to determine whether you are in fact voting in the correct precinct and why your name is missing from the precinct register book. A provisional ballot is only counted when cast at the precinct in which the voter is registered.¹³

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 voter's name may only be removed from the list of registered voters if:

- you submit a written request for cancellation;
- you die;
- you are of unsound mind as established by a court;
- you are incarcerated for a felony;
- a certified court order directing the cancellation of your registration is filed with the election administrator;
- notice is received from the Secretary of State or from another county or state that you have registered in another county or state;
- you fail to respond to certain confirmation mailings, are placed on the inactive list, and then fail to vote in two consecutive federal general elections; or
- you are not:
 - 18 years of age or older;
 - a resident of the state of Montana and of the county in which you offer to vote for at least 30 days, except when you changed residence to a different county 30 days or less before an election; or
 - a citizen of the United States.¹⁴

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?

Montana does not have "true" early voting, but you may go to your local elections office and request, obtain, and vote an absentee ballot in-person, however such ballot will not be counted until election day.¹⁵

HOW TO VOTE: ABSENTEE AND/OR VOTE BY MAIL

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

Any registered voter may vote by absentee ballot. Absentee ballots are mailed to eligible voters 25 days before Election Day.

A voter may apply for an absentee ballot by filling out an application for absentee ballot available online (<https://sosmt.gov/wp-content/uploads/Application-for-Absentee-Ballot.pdf>) or by making a written request which must include the applicant's birth date and signature.¹⁶

16. APPLICATION DEADLINE: What is the deadline for requesting an absentee ballot?

The application for an absentee ballot must be submitted to the election administrator of the applicant's county of residence before noon on the day before Election Day.¹⁷ Election administrators must make absentee ballots available beginning 30 days prior to Election Day for those voting absentee in person, and 25 days prior to Election Day for mailing ballots if the election is to be conducted on a primary or general Election Day.¹⁸

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

For both in person and mailed in absentee ballots, the voter must return the ballot with appropriate enclosures by regular mail or by delivering it in person by 8pm on Election Day to:

- The county election office;
- A polling place within the voter's county; or
- The absentee election board or an authorized election official.¹⁹

You may designate another person to pick up your absentee ballot on your behalf by completing this section of the application. See a sample absentee ballot [here](#).

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

If you have not requested your absentee ballot by 12pm the day before Election Day, you must vote in person.

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

No, anyone may request an absentee ballot without reason.²⁰

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

You can check the status of your application, absentee ballot and voting registration at the Montana Secretary of State's "My Voter Page" website (<https://app.mt.gov/voterinfo/>).

21. 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?

Voters should be given notice as soon as possible, by the election administrator, that there is a problem with their absentee ballot. Upon receiving such notice and before 8:00 p.m. on Election Day, such voter may either:

- resolve the issue, confirm validity of the ballot, etc.,²¹ or
- request and receive a replacement ballot.²²

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

Instructions for completing and returning the absentee ballot will be included in the absentee ballot packet you receive.²³ You will need to sign your ballot **and** the affirmation on the return envelope. Instructions are also available online at: <https://sosmt.gov/wp-content/uploads/attachments/Absentee-Voting-Instructions.pdf?dt=1519325225636>

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

A voter may request a replacement ballot if their ballot is lost, spoiled, destroyed, or not received by the voter.²⁴ Alternatively, the voter may go to their appropriate polling place on Election Day and vote in person after being issued a provisional ballot.²⁵

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

Refer to Question 23 above.

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

As long as the voter has not already submitted the absentee ballot, the voter will be allowed to cast a provisional ballot.²⁶

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

In order for the ballot to be counted it must be received prior to 8 p.m. on Election Day.²⁷ A voter may at any time request that an absentee ballot be mailed for each subsequent election (including when the voter registers to vote).²⁸

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

You can find a list of election offices where you may drop off a completed absentee ballot [here](#).

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

Yes, but that person must be related to you as a caregiver, family member, household member, or acquaintance. A person dropping off a ballot for someone else must sign the Ballot Collector Registry form on the back of the absentee ballot instructions.

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

You can vote in-person at your appropriate polling place. You can find your polling place at the Montana Secretary of State's "My Voter Page" website (<https://app.mt.gov/voterinfo/>).

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?

Polling places must be open between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on Election Day. However, there is an exception for a polling place with fewer than 400 registered voters, which must be open from at least noon to the earlier of 8 p.m. or until all registered voters in any precinct have voted, at which time that precinct must close immediately.²⁹ As long as you are in line by 8:00 p.m., you must be allowed to vote.

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

If a voter has moved recently and has not updated their voter registration, refer to [Questions #6 and 7](#).

You can find your polling place at the Montana Secretary of State's "My Voter Page" website (<https://app.mt.gov/voterinfo/>).

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

When voting at the polls, the voter must present a current ID, including but not limited to:

- A current photo ID showing the voter's name (such as a driver's license, state ID, school ID, or tribal ID); or
- A current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, voter registration confirmation, government check or other government document (e.g., hunting license) showing the voter's current name **and** current address.

If you do not have any of the items listed above, you can still vote by requesting and filling out a "Polling Place Elector ID" form.³⁰ Even if the information provided by the voter differs from the information in the precinct registration a voter will be allowed to sign the precinct register, complete a new registration form and vote if the election official determines that the information sufficiently verifies the voter's identity.³¹ Alternatively, you can vote a provisional ballot, but this should be a last resort.

POLLING PLACE ISSUES

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

If you are a voter and the polling place is not open at 7:00 a.m., try contacting an election official. You can find contact information for your election offices and officials [here](#).

***Note to hotline volunteer:** If a polling place is not open at 7:00 a.m., contact your hotline captain. Advise voters to stay at the polling location and that someone is contacting an election official to address the issue.

***Note to field workers:** If a polling place and it is not open at 7:00 a.m., try to speak with the poll workers and find out why the polling place isn't open and an estimated time of opening. Contact your hotline captain, who will notify the County Supervisor of Elections.

37. 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?

See question 37 for contacting an election official. See Question 34 for answer if voter is in line when polls are closing.

***Note to hotline volunteer:** If you learn of long lines, notify your hotline captain immediately.

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

Montana law does not have specific rules regarding malfunctioning voting equipment.³² Voters should immediately notify the election officers if the voting equipment breaks down while the polls are open. Additionally, a voter should ask if an emergency paper ballot is available.

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

***Note to field workers:** If you are a field volunteer at a polling place and the equipment is not working properly, notify your hotline captain, who will notify a voting machine expert. Remember, a voter can use an emergency paper ballot, and should request one if it is not offered.

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

All counties are directed to establish and enforce COVID-19 protocols consistent with CDC guidelines and state and local public health directives.³³ See question 37 for contacting an election official.

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

Instructions on how to prepare a ballot or use a voting system must be posted in each voting station provided for the preparation of ballots. The instructions must be in easily read type, 18 point or larger, and explain:

- How to obtain ballots for voting;
- How to prepare ballots, including how to:
 - Cast a valid vote, including a valid vote for a write-in candidate;
 - Correct a mistake;
 - Ensure the proper disposition of the ballot after the elector is finished voting;
- How to obtain a new ballot in place of one spoiled by accident; and
- How to vote provisionally pursuant to 13-13-601 of the Montana Code.³⁴

Additionally, sample ballots, clearly marked "sample" across the face, must be posted at each voting station and in conspicuous places around the polling place.³⁵

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

If you cannot enter the polling place because of your disability or seniority, election judges should bring your ballot to you in your automobile to complete. Also, if you are assigned to an inaccessible polling place, you have the right to ask in writing seven days prior to Election Day to be reassigned to the nearest accessible polling place.³⁶ You can also ask to vote by absentee ballot at a designated voting station at the county election administrator's office. More information on voters with disabilities can be found at: <https://sosmt.gov/elections/disabilities/>; and <https://sosmt.gov/elections/faq/#voting-systems-equipped-for-people-with-disabilities>.

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. Montana law requires that each polling place have at least one specialized voting machine (called "voter interface device") that will enable people with disabilities to vote independently.³⁷ Any disabled voter who needs assistance voting is entitled to have some 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.³⁸ More information on voters with disabilities can be found at: <https://sosmt.gov/elections/disabilities/>; and <https://sosmt.gov/elections/faq/#voting-systems-equipped-for-people-with-disabilities>.

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

See Question 42 for information on curbside voting. In light of COVID-19, counties are being encouraged to consider more curbside voting options.³⁹

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

Montana law prohibits campaigning or electioneering on Election Day **within any polling place or within 100 feet** of any entrance to the building in which the polling place is located. In this context, campaigning or electioneering means soliciting support or opposition to a candidate or issue to be voted on at the polling place in question. Offering or distributing food, drink, or other material benefit by a candidate, a candidate’s family member, or a worker or volunteer for a candidate’s campaign to encourage recognition, support, or opposition to a candidate or issue is similarly prohibited. A person may not buy, sell, give, wear, or display at or about the polls on Election Day any badge, button, or other insignia designed or which tends to aid or promote the success or defeat of any candidate or ballot issue to be voted upon in the election, though voters are not specifically prohibited from bringing election materials into the polling place for their own use.⁴⁰ On Election Day, no person is permitted to obstruct the doors or entries of any polling place or otherwise interfere with the election process or obstruct the access of voters to or from the polling place.⁴¹

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

A voter’s right to vote may be challenged at any time by any registered voter. The challenging voter must fill out and sign an affidavit stating the grounds of the challenge and providing evidence in support. If your right to vote is challenged, you may fill out and sign an affidavit refuting the challenge. If you were not present when the challenge was made, you must be notified of who made the challenge and its grounds, and must be given an explanation as to what information may be provided to respond. You must also be provided a copy of the challenger’s affidavit and any supporting evidence.⁴²

If your right to vote is challenged prior to the close of voting registration, the election administrator must question both you and the individual making the challenge and may question others to determine whether the challenge is sufficient or not. If the challenge is made after registration is closed or on Election Day, you may cast a provisional ballot.⁴³ See Question 48 below for details regarding provisional ballots.

Additional information on voter challenges may be found here: <https://sosmt.gov/elections/official-forms/#challenge-forms>

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.

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

Ask why you were offered a provisional ballot. You should only be offered a provisional ballot when:

- You presented no ID or the ID presented was not accepted as a current ID (see Question 3); or
- Your name does not appear in the precinct register book and eligibility to vote cannot otherwise be established (see Question 12); or
- Insufficient information is included in a mailed ballot.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Casting a provisional ballot is a last resort, and before doing so you should attempt to determine whether you are in fact voting in the correct precinct, why your name is missing from the precinct register book, or why the ID presented was not accepted.⁴⁴ A provisional ballot is counted only when cast at the precinct in which the voter is registered.⁴⁵

In order for a provisional ballot to be counted you have until 5 p.m. the day after Election Day to provide valid ID or eligibility information either in person, by facsimile, by electronic means, or by mail postmarked no later than the day after Election Day.⁴⁶ A provisional ballot cast due to insufficient identification must be counted if the signature on your affirmation and the signature on your registration form match. A provisional ballot must also be counted if the election administrator verifies your identity or eligibility. However, if the signatures do not match or you fail to provide valid identification by the deadline then the ballot will be rejected. The election administrator must provide an individual who casts a provisional ballot, but whose ballot was or was not counted, with the reasons why the ballot was or was not counted. Provisional ballots cast by voters whose eligibility is not determined by the end of Election Day may not be counted until 3 p.m. on the sixth day after Election Day.⁴⁷

QUESTIONS

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

You can find contact information for your election offices and officials [here](#).

¹ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-2-201.

² Mont. Code Ann. § 13-2-110(4)(b).

³ <https://sosmt.gov/elections/vote/#how-to-register-to-vote>

⁴ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-2-304.

⁵ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-2-304 ; <https://sosmt.gov/elections/vote/#how-to-register-to-vote>.

⁶ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-2-512.

⁷ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-2-514.

⁸ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-21-102.

⁹ Mont. Code Ann. §13-21-222.

¹⁰ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-21-221 ; <https://sosmt.gov/elections/military-overseas/#registering-to-vote>

¹¹ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-1-111(2).

¹² Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-114.

¹³ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-15-107(3); 13-13-114.

¹⁴ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-2-402.

¹⁵ <https://sosmt.gov/elections/faq/#absentee-voting>.

¹⁶ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-212(1)(a).

- ¹⁷ Mont. Code Ann. §§ 13-13-211(1).
- ¹⁸ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-205(1)(a) (There is only a 20 day requirement for special purpose district or school district elections.).
- ¹⁹ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-201(2)(e)(i)-(iii); S.B. 148, 66th Leg., Reg. Sess. (2019) (enacted), <https://leg.mt.gov/bills/2019/billpdf/SB0148.pdf>.
- ²⁰ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-212(1)(a).
- ²¹ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-245(2)(a).
- ²² Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-204(2)(a).
- ²³ <https://sosmt.gov/elections/absentee/>.
- ²⁴ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-204(2)(a).
- ²⁵ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-204(2)(b).
- ²⁶ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-204. Moreover, an absentee voter is no longer required to return any unvoted ballot for primary election. S.B. 101, 66th Leg., Reg. Sess. (2019) (enacted), <https://leg.mt.gov/bills/2019/billpdf/SB0101.pdf>.
- ²⁷ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-201(3).
- ²⁸ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-212(3).
- ²⁹ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-1-106.
- ³⁰ Mont. Admin. R. § 44.3.2110(2)(b).
- ³¹ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-114(1)(c).
- ³² See Mont. Code Ann. § 13-17-101 et seq.; Mont. Admin. R. § 44.3.1701 et seq. (containing provisions for voting systems but not malfunctioning voting equipment).
- ³³ https://covid19.mt.gov/Portals/223/Documents/2020-08-06_Directive%20-%20November%20Elections.pdf.
- ³⁴ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-112.
- ³⁵ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-112.
- ³⁶ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-3-213.
- ³⁷ S.B. 291, 66th Leg., Reg. Sess. § 1(2) (2019) (enacted), *available at*: <https://legiscan.com/MT/text/SB291/id/1933570/Montana-2019-SB291-Amended.pdf>; *Electronic Ballot Request System*, Montana Secretary of State, <https://sosmt.gov/elections/disabilities/>.
- ³⁸ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-119; 52 U.S.C. § 10508.
- ³⁹ https://covid19.mt.gov/Portals/223/Documents/2020-08-06_Directive%20-%20November%20Elections.pdf.
- ⁴⁰ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-35-211.
- ⁴¹ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-35-218.
- ⁴² Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-301.
- ⁴³ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-301(3).
- ⁴⁴ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-114.
- ⁴⁵ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-15-107(3); 13-13-114.
- ⁴⁶ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-15-107.
- ⁴⁷ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-15-107.