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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 – Last Updated 11/01/2020**

#### **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?](#)

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## REGISTERING TO VOTE

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

You can determine whether the caller is registered to vote by checking the Pennsylvania Department of State's website: <https://www.pavoterservices.state.pa.us/Pages/VoterRegistrationStatus.aspx>.

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

To register to vote:<sup>1</sup>

1. Fill out a voter registration application form. You can fill out the application form **online, by mail, or in-person** at your county voter registration office, PennDOT, and some other government agencies.

Go to this website for the online application: <https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/VoterRegistrationApplication.aspx>.

If you do not have access to a printer, you should register online or in-person at the offices listed above.

2. Your county voter registration office will review the form.
3. If your registration is accepted, you will get a voter registration card in the mail. The voter registration card will show your name, address, party affiliation, and the address where you will vote. Your registration card will be sent to the address that you entered on your registration application.

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

You do not need to show identification to register to vote but do need to supply your PA Driver's License number or PennDOT license number or provide the last four digits of your Social Security Number.<sup>2</sup>

### 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 voter registration deadline is 15 days before an election.<sup>3</sup> For the 2020 General Election, the deadline is **October 19, 2020**. Voter registration [applications](#) submitted by mail will be processed only if they are **actually received** by your county election office by the deadline; it does not matter when they are postmarked.<sup>4</sup> As such, voters wishing to submit their registration applications are advised to mail them in advance of the deadline on October 19, 2020.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Pennsylvania also offers online voter registration at [register.votespa.com](https://register.votespa.com). For most applicants, as long as an application is submitted via the online system by 11:59 p.m. on the voter registration deadline, the voter will be eligible to vote in the upcoming election. Note that if the applicant does not have a PennDOT ID, PA driver’s license or state ID card, they will have to upload a photograph of their signature or submit their signature by mail.<sup>5</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?**

Not unless you are a member of the military. The last day for civilians to register to vote in Pennsylvania for the 2020 General Election is October 19, 2020.<sup>6</sup> Members of military who are not registered to vote may apply in-person and vote at their county election office on Election day.<sup>7</sup>

**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.<sup>8</sup>

<b>Moved within the same precinct</b>	<b>Moved to a different precinct but within the same county</b>	<b>Moved to a different election jurisdiction (typically a different county)</b>	<b>Moved from a different state</b>
<p>The voter should go to their polling place (which should be the same for their old and new addresses) and will be permitted to vote a regular ballot after filling out a written affirmation of the change of address.</p>	<p>If the voter moved within 30 days before the election (on or after October 2, 2020), the voter should go to the polling place for their <b>former residence</b> and will be permitted to vote a regular ballot after filling out a written affirmation of the change of address.</p>	<p>If the voter moved to a different county within 30 days of the election, they should go to their old polling place, where they need to fill out a change of address form providing notice of the new address and the county where the voter moved. They may have to fill out a written affirmation that they have moved. After the election, the county election office for both your old and new addresses will update your voter registration. You will receive a new voter registration card matching your new address.</p> <p>They may also vote absentee at the old address one time.<sup>9</sup></p>	<p>The voter must be a resident of Pennsylvania and the election district for at least 30 days before the next election to be able to vote in Pennsylvania.</p>

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

The voter should request an absentee ballot or mail-in ballot to vote by mail, and have it sent to their temporary location.

**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?**

Students attending college in Pennsylvania who meet the registration requirements may register to vote in Pennsylvania, but may also choose to register and vote at their prior home address. The key to whether they are eligible to register in Pennsylvania will likely be whether the student has met the 30-day residency requirement in their election district,<sup>10</sup> and this will depend on that individual voter's situation. For example,

- An existing student who has resided in the election district where they want to register for more than 30 days may still be eligible to vote there, even if they have been temporarily displaced – so long as they intend to return to that election district, to continue their studies or otherwise.
- A freshman or new student who has never actually resided in Pennsylvania, say, because they have ever only attended remote classes, may not be eligible.

Information for college students seeking to register to vote in Pennsylvania can be found here: <https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Pages/College-Student.aspx>.

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

Those living abroad can still register to vote online or through the mail. To vote, those living abroad can request and vote with an absentee ballot.<sup>11</sup>

Absent uniformed service members (and their eligible dependents) and U.S. citizens living outside of the United States may request an absentee ballot under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA). The voter can get step-by-step assistance and forms at <http://www.fvap.gov/>.

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

Usually, yes.<sup>12</sup> Individuals who have been convicted of a felony may register to vote unless they are currently serving a felony sentence of incarceration on election day. Voters with misdemeanor convictions or on probation are always eligible to vote, and individuals in pre-trial detention and not serving time for a felony conviction may vote via absentee ballot.<sup>13</sup> People on parole or probation are eligible to vote.<sup>14</sup>

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

However, if a voter was incarcerated for a felony but is no longer incarcerated, they may need to re-register to vote before the registration deadline, especially if they live at a different address after release.<sup>15</sup>

You are **not** eligible to register and vote if you:

- Are currently confined in a penal institution for conviction of a felony (even if you are also incarcerated for one or more misdemeanor offenses) and will not be released from confinement before the next election;
- Are in a community confinement facility or other alternative correctional facility for conviction of a felony, and will not be released before the date of the next election; or
- Were convicted of violating any provision of the Pennsylvania Election Code within the last four years.<sup>16</sup>

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

You are eligible to vote if you are currently confined on account of a misdemeanor offense, if you will be released from confinement before the next election, or if you are being held pre-trial. If you are incarcerated for a felony offense and will not be released before the next election, you are not eligible to vote. If you are currently incarcerated for a misdemeanor offense, you may apply for and vote with an absentee ballot.<sup>17</sup>

If you are not confined in a penal institution, community confinement facility, or under house arrest, you may vote in person at your assigned precinct (polling place) or by absentee ballot.<sup>18</sup>

#### **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?**

A voter must vote at their assigned precinct. Voters should ask the poll worker to check the supplemental book and if not listed there, to call the county elections office to check their records. A voter may vote using a provisional ballot if their name is not on the voter registration list but they believe they are a registered voter and eligible to vote in this election.<sup>19</sup>

The voter should vote in their correct precinct/division. However, if a voter casts a provisional ballot at the wrong precinct/division, it should be counted as long as the voter lives in that county and only if the voter did not intentionally vote in the wrong precinct/division. The ballot will count only for those races that the voter would have been eligible to vote for in the voter's correct precinct/division.<sup>20</sup>

The County Board of Elections has seven days to determine the validity of a provisional ballot. A voter may check their provisional ballot status after the seven-day period by either by checking online at <https://www.pavoterservices.state.pa.us/Pages/ProvisionalBallotSearch.aspx> or calling 1-877-VOTESPA.

**13. THOUGHT THEY WERE 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?**

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](#)).
- Has the voter changed their name recently, or could he/she be registered under a different name? Check that name (and any variations of the voter's name, especially for hyphenated names, which sometimes trip up databases) in the registration lookup tool. (See [Question #1](#)).
- When/where did the voter register to vote? Was that before the deadline?

Voters should only be removed from the voting list due to:<sup>21</sup>

- The voter's request;
- The elections office receiving notice of the voter's death;
- Upon confirmation that the voter has moved to a residence outside the county;
- Or under a "voter removal program," which might remove a voter from the voter rolls based on the voter's (1) failure to respond to a notice requesting that the voter confirm that they live in the district, and their (2) failure to vote over two federal election cycles after receiving that notice.

Any voter whose name was properly removed from the voter registration list must re-register.

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## HOW TO VOTE: EARLY VOTING

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

Absentee voting and mail-in voting allows registered voters to vote by mail before an Election Day. There are two types of voting before election day in Pennsylvania:

Absentee voting: Only certain individuals are eligible to vote by absentee ballot:<sup>22</sup>

- Members of the military, regardless of whether or not the individual is present in their municipality of residence on election day;
- Members of the Merchant Marines, religious or welfare groups officially attached to and serving with the armed forces, spouses and dependents of such individuals, and spouses and dependents of members of the military, provided, however, the individual is absent from their municipality of residence on election day;

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

- A voter who is ill or physically disabled;
- A voter who expects to be away from their municipality of residence on election day from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.;
- A county employee who will be unable to attend the polls due to election day obligations;
- A voter is unable to go to the polls on election day due to a religious holiday.

Vote-by-mail: No excuse is required to vote by mail.<sup>23</sup>

What does it mean if my voter registration status is “inactive”?

Your voter registration may be “inactive” if you have not voted in a recent election. You can still vote if you are listed as inactive. When you go to your polling place on election day, you will be asked to sign an affirmation. Once you vote, your status will be changed back to active status<sup>24</sup>.

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

For voting by mail, no. For absentee voting, yes, as described above.

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

In PA, voters can vote early using a mail-in ballot. These may be obtained in two ways. Application can be made online. Or, voters may appear at their county election office or at designated satellite election offices before Election Day, apply for a mail-in ballot, be presented with a mail-in ballot, mark it, place it in the official election ballot secrecy envelope, place the envelope in the outer return envelope, sign the declaration and submit the completed ballot all at the same time. This is referred to by some as in-person early voting. In some counties, voters must make an appointment before appearing at their county election office or at a designated satellite election office. No matter how they are obtained, voters may return mail-in ballots either by mailing them in or placing them in a designated drop box.

**The last day to do all-in-one early voting (applying for your ballot and voting it early in person) is 5 p.m. October 27. Voters may continue to drop off mail-in ballots in person until November 3, so long as they have applied for it before October 27.**

You can find locations and hours here: <https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Mail-and-Absentee-Ballot.aspx>

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

There is technically no early in-person voting in Pennsylvania. Voters can apply for and submit a mail in ballot in person at their county election office or designated satellite office. You can find locations and hours here: <https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Early-Voting.aspx#where> Voters may also return their mail-in ballots early in accordance with the mail-in voting rules.

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

There is technically no early in-person or absentee voting in Pennsylvania. Mail-in and absentee ballot applications require a PA Driver's license or a PennDOT identification number. If the voter does not have one of those, they may use the last 4 digits of their Social Security Number. Only if a voter has none of those will they be required to show a voter ID.

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

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

You must request an absentee or mail-in ballot. Pennsylvania does not automatically provide an absentee or mail-in ballot for voters.

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

**Applying for an Absentee or Mail-In Ballot.**<sup>25</sup> The County Board of Elections must **actually receive** an application for absentee or mail-in ballots by 5:00 p.m. on October, 27, 2020 - the Tuesday before the election.<sup>26</sup> If the voter requests it, the County Board of Elections will send a paper absentee or mail-in ballot to the voter.<sup>27</sup> Some counties may also proactively send applications to every registered voter.

**Identification.**<sup>28</sup>

- When applying for an absentee ballot or mail in ballot online, the voter must provide a PA driver's license or PennDOT identification number if they have one. If the voter does not have either of those forms of ID, they may supply the last four digits of their Social Security number.
- When applying via paper form, the voter must provide a PA driver's license or PennDOT identification number if they have it. If the voter does not have either of those forms of ID, they may supply the last 4 digits of their Social Security number.
- If the voter does not have one of the above, they can provide a photocopy of one of the following IDs with your absentee or mail-in ballot application. The photocopy must show name, a photo, and an expiration date that is current:
  - U.S. Passport
  - U.S. Military ID (active duty and retired military ID may designate an expiration date that is indefinite). Military dependents' ID must contain a current expiration date.
  - Employee photo identification issued by Federal, Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania County, or Pennsylvania Municipal government.
  - Photo identification issued by an accredited Pennsylvania public or private institution of higher learning.
  - Photo identification issued by a Pennsylvania care facility, including long-term care facilities, assisted living residences and personal care homes.

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

You can apply for an absentee ballot or a mail-in ballot online, here: <https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Mail-and-Absentee-Ballot.aspx>.

You may also return your application by mailing it to your county election office.

Voters can also apply for, obtain and submit a mail in ballot in person at their county election office or designated satellite office. You can find locations and hours here: <https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Early-Voting.aspx#where>.

Generally, you must deliver your application for a mail-in or absentee ballot yourself. If you are physically unable to deliver your application yourself, you may fill out a “Certification of Designated Agent” form, which allows the voter to designate a representative, in writing, to deliver the application to and/or from the voter.<sup>29</sup> This form is available here: <https://www.votespa.com/Resources/Documents/Authorize-Designated-Agent-for-Mail-in-or-Absentee-Ballot.pdf>.

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

If a voter has not requested an absentee ballot but has an emergency and is unable to go to the polls at the last minute, they may submit a [Emergency Absentee Ballot Application](#) to the County Board of Elections **between 5:00 p.m. on the Tuesday before election day and 8:00 p.m. on election day**. Given the short window between filing the application and when the ballot must be submitted, the voter may want to consider designating another person to pick up and/or drop off their ballot with the County Board of Elections. The form for the voter and the form for the designated representative can be found at the hyperlink above.

Voting by Elders and Individuals with Disabilities: Additional voting options (i.e., alternative ballots) are available for elderly voters and those with disabilities. See [Question #42](#).

Military-Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting: Absent uniformed service members (and their eligible dependents) and U.S. citizens living outside of the United States may request an absentee ballot under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA). The voter can get step-by-step assistance and forms at <http://www.fvap.gov/>.

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

The following people may vote by absentee ballot if they are registered to vote:<sup>30</sup>

- A person with an illness or physical disability who is unable to go to the polling place or to operate a voting machine and obtain assistance by distinct and audible statement.
- A person who will not go to a polling place on election day because of the observance of a religious holiday.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

- A spouse or dependent residing with or accompanying a person in the military service of the United States.
- A member of the Merchant Marine and their spouse and dependents residing with or accompanying them.
- A member of a religious or welfare group attached to and serving with the armed forces and their spouse and dependents residing with or accompanying them.
- A spouse or dependent accompanying a person employed by the state of Pennsylvania or the federal government, whose duties, occupation or business on election day require them to be away from Pennsylvania or their municipality of residence.
- An individual, and their spouse and dependents residing with or accompanying them, with duties, occupation or business (including leaves of absence for teaching, vacations and sabbatical leaves) away from their official residence on election day.
- A county employee who expects that their election day duties relating to the conduct of the election will prevent them from voting.

However, any registered voter is eligible to request a mail-in ballot.

Absentees and mail-in ballots both require the voter to apply and are processed the same way by the Election Office.

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

You can visit this website to see the status of your application and ballot: <https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/BallotTracking.aspx>.

You may also contact your county election office via telephone. Contact information for your County Election Officials may be found here: <https://www.votespa.com/Resources/Pages/Contact-Your-Election-Officials.aspx>.

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

If your application is rejected, contact your county board of elections to get more information.

You may also want to check the ballot tracking website to ensure that you have not previously applied for a vote by mail or absentee ballot, here: <https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/BallotTracking.aspx>.

You may reapply for another ballot. A county Board of Elections cannot decline the voter's application for a mail-in or absentee ballot without a bona fide objection to the mail-in or absentee ballot application.<sup>31</sup> Note that in some counties, voters who are listed on the permanent mail-in list or who have already applied for a mail-in ballot may receive notice that their ballot has been rejected if they try to reapply. It may be that only their duplicate request has been rejected. This can be confirmed by checking the ballot status site or calling the county BOE.<sup>32</sup>

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

To complete the ballot, complete the following steps:<sup>33</sup>

1. Mark your ballot, following the instructions.
2. Place your ballot in the secrecy envelope, seal it, and then put the secrecy envelope into the outer return envelope. **Be sure to use the secrecy envelope and sign the declaration on the back of the outer envelope, or your ballot may not count.**
3. Return your ballot so it arrives at the county election office or other designated location on time.

As for identification, you will have been required to provide identification at the time you requested your mail-in or absentee ballot, rather than when you are submitting your ballot.

**27. LOST OR SPOILED: What if I lost my absentee or mail-in ballot or it is spoiled (i.e. ruined) or I received an incorrect one?**

**You can ask your county elections office to send you a new ballot** and void the old one. (But if you find or receive your original ballot, make sure not to use it.<sup>34</sup> It will not be counted once it's been voided in the system). If you received an incorrect ballot, do not vote with it; you cannot return a ballot that does not belong to you.<sup>35</sup>

If you want to intentionally spoil or invalidate your mail-in or absentee ballot and there is not enough time to receive another ballot from the county elections office, you can bring the ballot, and the outer return envelope, to your polling place on Election Day, surrender your original ballot to the Judge of Elections and vote in person.<sup>36</sup> You will also be required to sign an affirmation that you have not voted previously in the election.

If you are not able to surrender the ballot that you received in the mail, you may only be permitted to vote on a provisional ballot, which is a paper ballot that is set aside and counted once it is clear you are eligible to vote and have not already voted.<sup>37</sup>

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

**You can ask your county elections office to send you a new ballot** and void the old one. (But if you find or receive your original ballot, make sure not to use it.<sup>38</sup> It will not be counted once it's been voided in the system).

Pennsylvania voters who have not yet received their absentee or mail in ballot and are worried that it will not arrive in time can visit their county election office (and in some counties at satellite election offices) and **ask that their ballot be cancelled and that they be reissued a new ballot.** Not all counties allow for this at satellite elections offices, but all of them should allow this at county elections offices.<sup>39</sup>

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

You can still vote in-person on election day if you previously requested an absentee or mail-in ballot, but you should bring the ballot package that you were sent (including the ballot and both envelopes, but especially the outer ballot return envelope) to the polling place with you, and you must have that ballot voided before you can vote in-person.

If you are not able to surrender the ballot that you received in the mail, you will only be permitted to vote on a provisional ballot, which is a paper ballot that is set aside and counted once it is clear you are eligible to vote.

Specifically for Absentee Voters: With the exception of voters who are in the military or who are ill or disabled such that they cannot vote in person, any voter who has requested an absentee ballot, but is in the municipality of their residence on the day of the election must vote in person at their polling place. An absentee ballot issued to such a voter will be deemed void. There, the judge of elections (one of the poll workers) will ask the voter to sign an affidavit.

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

Based on a recent court decision, the ballot must be postmarked by 8:00 pm on Election Day, and must be actually received by 5:00 pm on November 6, 2020 (three days after Election Day). However, due to the possibility of continued litigation, we still recommend having all ballots actually received by Election Day.

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

You may return a voted ballot in the county board of elections office.<sup>40</sup> In some counties, you may also return a voted ballot to a satellite elections office or to a drop box.

A list of satellite elections offices is available here: <https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Early-Voting.aspx>

A list of drop boxes is available here: <https://www.votespa.com/voting-in-pa/pages/drop-box.aspx>

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

Generally, you must deliver your ballot yourself. If you are physically unable to deliver your ballot yourself, you may fill out a "Certification of Designated Agent" form, which allows the voter to designate a representative, in writing, to deliver the ballot to and/or from the voter.<sup>41</sup> This form is available here: <https://www.votespa.com/Resources/Documents/Authorize-Designated-Agent-for-Mail-in-or-Absentee-Ballot.pdf>.

An individual with a disability is defined by the ADA as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment. The ADA does not specifically name all of the impairments that are covered - <https://www.ada.gov/cguide.htm>.

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

You can return your absentee ballot by mail or you may deliver it in-person to your county board of elections or a designated drop-off location.<sup>42</sup>

For in-person drop-off, the voter must complete the ballot and submit it to the County Board of Elections in-person or through a drop-box or other designated location, and the board must actually receive the ballot before 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.

For return by mail, the voter should complete the ballot mail it to the County Board of Elections, making sure that it is postmarked no later than 8:00 p.m. on Election Day. The Board must actually receive the ballot before 5:00 p.m. on November 6, three days after Election Day.<sup>43</sup>

Note that prior to a recent Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruling, ballots returned by mail had to be actually received by the County Board of Elections by 5:00 p.m. on Election Day. The ruling of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court has provided a three day extension as to when the vote may actually be received, but the vote must be postmarked by no later than 8:00 p.m. on Election Day. Nevertheless, we still recommend that voters intending to mail their absentee or mail-in ballots do so as soon as possible to avoid any issues.<sup>44</sup>

All mail-in and absentee ballots must be submitted inside the inner secrecy envelope.<sup>45</sup> The Pennsylvania Supreme Court recently decided that submission through the mail requires that voters place their mail-in or absentee ballots be placed inside of the inner secrecy envelope that was sent along with their ballot, before submitting it.<sup>46</sup>

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## HOW TO VOTE: ELECTION DAY

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

The polls must be open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.<sup>47</sup> A voter in line at the polling place by 8:00 p.m. must be allowed to vote. Voters may line up prior to 7:00 a.m.

**\*Note to hotline volunteer:** If you learn that a polling place prohibits those who were in line by the time the polls closed 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?

Your polling place may have changed or been consolidated since the last time you voted. A voter can determine their proper polling place by checking the Pennsylvania Department of State's website (<https://www.pavoterservices.state.pa.us/Pages/PollingPlaceInfo.aspx>), and should continue to check this information leading up to election day.

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

**\*Note to hotline volunteer:** Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, many polling places have been moved or consolidated.

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

Pennsylvania voters are usually not required to show identification at the polling place.<sup>48</sup> Voters must show identification if they are voting for the first time or if they have not previously voted in their current election district.

Any of the following forms of photo ID are acceptable:<sup>49</sup>

- Pennsylvania driver's license;
- PennDOT ID card;
- ID issued by any Commonwealth agency;
- ID issued by the U.S. Government;
- U.S. Passport;
- U.S. Armed Forces ID;
- Student ID; or
- Employee ID.

If voters do not have photo ID, they can also present a document that includes their name and address. These include:

- Registration confirmation issued by the County Voter Registration Office (voter registration card);
- Current utility bill;
- Current bank statement;
- Current paycheck;
- Government check;
- Non-photo ID issued by the Commonwealth; or
- Non-photo ID issued by the U.S. Government.

If the first-time voter does not have proper ID, they can vote a provisional ballot.<sup>50</sup> The provisional ballot will not be counted unless the voter submits proof of identification to the county election office within 6 days of Election Day, either in person, via email, or via fax.

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## POLLING PLACE ISSUES

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

**\*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?

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?

Polling places with malfunctioning machines should allow voters to vote by emergency paper ballot if 50% or more of the machines at the polling place are down.<sup>51</sup>

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

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

You may place an election complaint and/or call the state election number (see question 49).

Registered voters may fill out an online complaint form here:

<https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/ReportElectionComplaints.aspx>.

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

Yes. Any voter may request instructions on how to operate the voting machine from poll workers before or after entering the voting machine booth but before the voter closes the booth.<sup>52</sup>

Voters who would like information about using the machines in their county ahead of time can find demos and infographics specific to their county's equipment here:

<https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Voting-at-a-Polling-Place.aspx>.

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

It should be. However, in some cases a polling place may not be easily accessible for voters with disabilities. If a voter lives in the City of Philadelphia, they can check here (<http://www.philadelphiavotes.com/en/voters/polling-place-accessibility>) to see if their polling place is fully accessible (most are not). For those outside of Philadelphia, see: <https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Accessible-Voting.aspx>.

If a voter with a disability is assigned to a polling place deemed inaccessible by the County Board of Elections, they may also vote by absentee or “alternative” ballot.<sup>53</sup> The voter must be:

- Registered to vote and assigned to a polling place that their county board of elections says is not accessible, and,
- Has a disability or is 65 years of age or older, regardless of disability status.

The Board of must receive requests for an alternative ballot by 5 p.m. on the Tuesday before Election Day.<sup>54</sup> However, a disabled or elderly voter may make an emergency application for alternative ballot at any time until 8:00 p.m. on Election Day. Both application forms are available here: <https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Alternative-Ballot.aspx>, or by calling 1-877-VOTESPA.<sup>55</sup>

Pennsylvania will also be offering a “Remote Ballot Marking Solution for Mail Voting” beginning with the November 3, 2020 election, which will allow registered voters who use screen readers and assistive devices to vote a mail ballot privately and independently. Information about how to apply for this type of assistance may be found here: <https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Accessible-Remote-Ballot-Marking-Solution-for-Mail-Voting.aspx>.

Alternatively, if the voter is ill or permanently disabled, and the voter’s attending physician certifies that the voter is physically unable to go to their polling place or operate a voting machine, then the voter may apply to be on the permanent absentee ballot list by filling out the “Certificate of Permanent Illness or Permanent Physical Disability” at the bottom of the absentee ballot application, available here: [https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Documents/Absentee\\_Ballot\\_Application.pdf](https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Documents/Absentee_Ballot_Application.pdf). The voter will then receive an absentee ballot for every election.<sup>56</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. A voter who is blind, disabled or illiterate may select a person of their choice (except the judge of elections, the voter’s employer or an agent of the employer, or an officer or agent of the voter’s union) to enter the voting machine booth with them to assist them in voting. If information about the voter’s disability is not recorded on their registration record, the voter will have to fill out a declaration of their need of assistance to vote, at the polling place.<sup>57</sup>

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

Pennsylvania does not permit curbside voting.<sup>58</sup> Rather, voters should utilize absentee or mail-in voting to avoid in-person voting.

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

Individuals are generally prohibited from being within 10 feet of the entrance to the polling place if they are not voting. Electioneering and soliciting are prohibited within the polling place.<sup>59</sup>

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

Any person, although personally registered as an elector, may be challenged by any qualified elector in that municipality, election officer, overseer, or watcher at any primary or election as to their identity, as to their continued residence in the election district or as to violations of the election code. (Note that this does not apply to party membership for primaries). Challenged voters are required to produce a qualified elector as a witness to make an affidavit of the challenged information.<sup>60</sup> If the voter does produce a witness, the voter may vote normally. If not, they must vote a provisional ballot.

**\*Note to hotline volunteer:** If you are on the phone with someone whose vote is being challenged, raise this to your hotline captain immediately.

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

Generally, the police and military are not allowed within 100 feet of a polling place unless they are voting themselves, are serving warrants, called upon to clear the path for voting or quell any disturbance, or headquartered in the same building as the polling location (which shall be in a separate room).<sup>61</sup> You may file an election complaint if you believe this statute has been violated and contact the state hotline (see Question 49).

**\*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?**

Voters should only be offered a provisional ballot for one of the following reasons:<sup>62</sup>

- The voter’s name does not appear in the poll book and election officials cannot determine the voter’s registration status;<sup>63</sup>
- The voter is voting in an election district for the first time and does not have an approved ID;<sup>64</sup>
- An election official asserts that the voter is not eligible to vote;
- The voter is voting as a result of a federal or state judicial order;<sup>65</sup> or
- The voter is voting as a result of an order extending the time established for closing the polls.<sup>66</sup>
- The voter was issued an absentee or mail in ballot and has not returned the ballot, or is unsure whether the ballot will be received in time.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Other than for these reasons, the voter should be able to cast a regular ballot. Voters should be sure to ask the poll worker if any additional steps will be needed to make sure the ballot is counted. If the individual voting the provisional ballot was not registered, the provisional ballot will not be counted. If the individual voting the provisional ballot was eligible to vote but not at the election district where the ballot was cast, the county board of elections will only count that portion of the ballot that the individual would have been eligible to vote in their proper election district.<sup>67</sup>

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## QUESTIONS

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

Call 1-877-868-3772 for official answers from the Pennsylvania Department of State (interpreters available).<sup>68</sup>

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- <sup>1</sup> <https://www.votespa.com/Register-to-Vote/Pages/How-to-Register-to-Vote.aspx>.
- <sup>2</sup> <https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/pages/VoterRegistrationApplication.aspx>.
- <sup>3</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3071.
- <sup>4</sup> See <https://www.pa.gov/guides/voting-and-elections/#RegisteringtoVote>.
- <sup>5</sup> <http://www.votespa.com/en-us/Pages/Online-Voter-Registration-FAQ.aspx>.
- <sup>6</sup> <https://www.votespa.com/About-Elections/Pages/Upcoming-Elections.aspx>
- <sup>7</sup> <https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Military-and-Overseas-Voters.aspx>.
- <sup>8</sup> <https://www.votespa.com/Register-to-Vote/Pages/How-to-Update-Your-Registraton.aspx>
- <sup>9</sup> 25 Pa.C.S. § 1501.
- <sup>10</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 2813; see *Dunn v. Blumstein*, 405 U.S. 330, 330 (1972); *Williams v. Salerno*, 792 F.2d 323, 328 (2d Cir. 1986); 1971 Op. Atty. Ga. Pa. 111, 1971 Pa. AG LEXIS 62 (1971).
- <sup>11</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3302; <https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Military-and-Overseas-Voters.aspx>.
- <sup>12</sup> See [https://www.votespa.com/Register-to-Vote/Documents/Convicted\\_felon\\_brochure.pdf](https://www.votespa.com/Register-to-Vote/Documents/Convicted_felon_brochure.pdf).
- <sup>13</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>14</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>15</sup> *Mixon v. Connecticut*, 759 A.2d 442 (Pa. 2000) (Ruling unconstitutional Pennsylvania election law stating that convicted felons may not vote until 5 years after their release from prison).
- <sup>16</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>17</sup> <https://www.votespa.com/Register-to-Vote/Pages/Convicted-Felon,-Misdemeanant-or-Pretrial-Detainee.aspx>.
- <sup>18</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>19</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3050(a.4).
- <sup>20</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3050(a.4)(7).
- <sup>21</sup> Pa. C. S. § 1901; see also <https://www.mcall.com/news/pennsylvania/mc-nws-voter-registration-purge-process-20180611-story.html>.
- <sup>22</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3146.6.
- <sup>23</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3150.11.
- <sup>24</sup> <https://www.votespa.com/Resources/Documents/PA-Voter-Registration-Guide.pdf>, at 21.
- <sup>25</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3146.2a.
- <sup>26</sup> <https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Mail-and-Absentee-Ballot.aspx>.
- <sup>27</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3146.6; § 3150.16.
- <sup>28</sup> [https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Documents/DOS\\_Identification\\_for\\_absentee\\_voting.pdf](https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Documents/DOS_Identification_for_absentee_voting.pdf).
- <sup>29</sup> <https://www.media.pa.gov/Pages/State-details.aspx?newsid=328>;  
<https://www.philadelphiavotes.com/en/voters/mail-in-and-absentee-ballots>;  
[https://www.bedfordcountypa.org/document\\_center/Elections/Certification\\_of\\_Designated\\_Agent.pdf](https://www.bedfordcountypa.org/document_center/Elections/Certification_of_Designated_Agent.pdf);  
<https://www.co.lancaster.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/5358/Certification-of-Designated-Agent-Absentee-or-Alternative?bidId=>.
- <sup>30</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3146.1.
- <sup>31</sup> [https://www.dos.pa.gov/VotingElections/OtherServicesEvents/Documents/PADOS\\_Act%2077\\_Absentee%20and%20Mail-in%20Guidance.pdf](https://www.dos.pa.gov/VotingElections/OtherServicesEvents/Documents/PADOS_Act%2077_Absentee%20and%20Mail-in%20Guidance.pdf), at 3-4.
- <sup>32</sup> <https://www.co.lancaster.pa.us/1351/FAQs-of-MAIL-IN-BALLOTS>.
- <sup>33</sup> <https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Mail-and-Absentee-Ballot.aspx>.
- <sup>34</sup> <https://www.inquirer.com/politics/election/inq/2020-election-pennsylvania-mail-in-person-voting-guide-20200918.html>.

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<sup>35</sup> See, e.g., <https://www.montcopa.org/3523/I-Received-the-Wrong-Ballot>.

<sup>36</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3146.6; § 3150.16.

<sup>37</sup> See, e.g., 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3150.6; § 3150.16.

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.inquirer.com/politics/election/inq/2020-election-pennsylvania-mail-in-person-voting-guide-20200918.html>.

<sup>39</sup> See, e.g., 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3146.6; § 3150.16.

<sup>40</sup> See <https://www.montcopa.org/754/Absentee-and-Mail-In-Voting>.

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.media.pa.gov/Pages/State-details.aspx?newsid=328>;  
<https://www.philadelphiavotes.com/en/voters/mail-in-and-absentee-ballots>;  
[https://www.bedfordcountypa.org/document\\_center/Elections/Certification\\_of\\_Designated\\_Agent.pdf](https://www.bedfordcountypa.org/document_center/Elections/Certification_of_Designated_Agent.pdf);  
<https://www.co.lancaster.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/5358/Certification-of-Designated-Agent-Absentee-or-Alternative?bidId=>.

<sup>42</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3146.6(a); <https://www.votespa.com/voting-in-pa/pages/drop-box.aspx>.

<sup>43</sup> *Pennsylvania Dem. Party v. Boockvar*, No. 133 MM 2020, J-96-2020, at \*37-38 (Penn. Sept. 17, 2020) (“After consideration, we adopt the Secretary’s informed recommendation of a three-day extension of the absentee and mail-in ballot received-by deadline to allow for the tabulation of ballots mailed by voters via the USPS and postmarked by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day to reduce voter disenfranchisement resulting from the conflict between the Election Code and the current USPS delivery standards, given the expected number of Pennsylvanians opting to use mail-in ballots during the pandemic. In so doing, we emphasize that the Pennsylvania’s election laws currently accommodate the receipt of certain ballots after Election Day[.] We conclude that this extension of the received-by deadline protects voters’ rights while being least at variance with Pennsylvania’s permanent election calendar, which we respect and do not alter lightly, even temporarily.”). Case is available at

[https://www.aclupa.org/sites/default/files/field\\_documents/majority\\_opinion\\_-\\_justice\\_baer.pdf](https://www.aclupa.org/sites/default/files/field_documents/majority_opinion_-_justice_baer.pdf).

<sup>44</sup> *Application for Stay of Court’s Opinion and Order of September 17, 2020 by Intervenor Respondents, Boockvar*, No. 133 MM 2020 (filed Sept. 22, 2020).

<sup>45</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3150.16(a).

<sup>46</sup> *Boockvar*, No. 133 MM 2020, J-96-2020, at \*53 (Penn. Sept. 17, 2020) (“[W]e hold that the secrecy provision language in Section 3150.16(a) is mandatory and the mail-in elector’s failure to comply with such requisite by enclosing the ballot in the secrecy envelope renders the ballot invalid.”). Case is available at [https://www.aclupa.org/sites/default/files/field\\_documents/majority\\_opinion\\_-\\_justice\\_baer.pdf](https://www.aclupa.org/sites/default/files/field_documents/majority_opinion_-_justice_baer.pdf).

<sup>47</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3045.

<sup>48</sup> *Applewhite v. Commonwealth*, No. 330 M.D. 2012, 2014 WL 184988 (Pa. Commw. Ct. Jan. 17, 2014).

<sup>49</sup> See <http://www.votespa.com/en-us/Pages/First-Time-Voter.aspx>.

<sup>50</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3050(a.4).

<sup>51</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3017; *Nat’l Ass’n for Advancement of Colored People State Conference of Pennsylvania v. Cortes*, 591 F. Supp. 2d 757, 767 (E.D. Pa. 2008); see also [http://www.dos.pa.gov/VotingElections/Documents/Elections%20Division/Administration/Use%20of%20emergency\\_paper\\_ballots.pdf](http://www.dos.pa.gov/VotingElections/Documents/Elections%20Division/Administration/Use%20of%20emergency_paper_ballots.pdf).

<sup>52</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3056(a)–(b).

<sup>53</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3146.2; <https://www.pa.gov/guides/voting-and-elections/#AbsenteeBallot>.

<sup>54</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3146.2; <https://www.pa.gov/guides/voting-and-elections/#AbsenteeBallot>.

<sup>55</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3146.2a; Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act of 1984, 52 U.S.C. § 201 formerly U.S.C. §§ 1973ee-1–6; see, e.g., *N.A.A.C.P. v. Philadelphia Bd. of Elections*, CIV. A. 97-7085, 1998 WL 321253 (E.D. Pa. 1998) (explaining that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has instituted the process of voting by “alternative ballot” to comply with the provisions of the Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act).

<sup>56</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3146.2(e.1).

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<sup>57</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3058; ; [https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Documents/Declaration%20of%20Need%20of%20Assistance\\_generic.pdf](https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Documents/Declaration%20of%20Need%20of%20Assistance_generic.pdf).

<sup>58</sup> <https://www.dos.pa.gov/VotingElections/Documents/Elections%20Division/Administration/Voting%20Procedures%20for%20the%20Elderly%20and%20Handicapped.pdf>, at 5.

<sup>59</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3060.

<sup>60</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3050(d).

<sup>61</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3047.

<sup>62</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 3050(a.4);

[http://www.dos.pa.gov/VotingElections/Documents/Elections%20Division/Administration/provisional\\_balloting\\_procedures.pdf](http://www.dos.pa.gov/VotingElections/Documents/Elections%20Division/Administration/provisional_balloting_procedures.pdf).

<sup>63</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann § 3050(a.2).

<sup>64</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann § 3050(a.2).

<sup>65</sup> 25 Pa. Stat. Ann § 3050(a.4)(1).

<sup>66</sup> 52 USC 21082(c).

<sup>67</sup> *Id.*

<sup>68</sup> <https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Election-Day-Hotline.aspx>.