

**Disclaimer:** This guide is designed for informational purposes only. It is not legal advice and is not intended to create an attorney-client relationship. The Election Protection Coalition does not warrant any information contained in this guide, nor does the Coalition suggest that the information in this guide should be used as a basis to pursue legal advice or decision-making.

**Note:** This FAQ is not exhaustive. Situations or inquiries may arise that are not answered below. In those circumstances, contact your hotline captain or command center for assistance. Please make sure to record all of the voter's contact information should follow-up be necessary.

### **TABLE OF CONTENTS – Last Updated 11/3/2020 12:15 pm**

#### **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?

A voter can determine whether they are registered to vote by checking the Virginia Department of Elections' website (<https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation>).

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

In order to register to vote in Virginia, a person must be 1) a resident of Virginia; 2) a U.S. Citizen; 3) 18 years old by Election Day; 4) not be registered AND plan to vote in another state; 5) not currently declared mentally incompetent by a court of law; and 6) if convicted of a felony, the right to vote must have been restored. If you are 17, you can still register and vote in elections if you will be 18 on or before the next general election

Eligible voters can register online at: <https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/Registration/DmvLookup> or by going to <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/> and clicking thru on the "Registration" link at the top of the page. Voters may register online, provided they have a valid Virginia DMV driver's license or state ID card.

Eligible voters without access to a computer can obtain a paper form at one of the following locations:

- Local voter registration office  
(<https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation/PublicContactLookup>)
- State or local government offices when applying or re-certifying for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), SNAP, WIC, Medicaid, or Rehabilitation Services.
- Government offices in the State that provide State-funded programs primarily engaged in providing services to person with disabilities
- Armed forces recruitment offices
- Public libraries
- Virginia Department of Elections office
- Department of Motor Vehicles offices
- Voter Registration Drives

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

To **vote** a regular ballot, Virginia voters must present a valid form of identification or sign an ID Confirmation Statement.<sup>i</sup>

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Forms of identification include but are not limited to:

- Valid Virginia driver's license, or any other state-issued photo ID
- Valid United States passport or passport card, or any other United States government-issued photo ID
- Valid photo ID issued by any political subdivision within Virginia
- U.S. Military ID
- Valid student ID card containing a photograph of the voter and issued by any institution of higher education located in Virginia, or any private school located in Virginia;
- Valid employee ID card containing a photograph of the voter and issued by the voter's employer in the ordinary course of the employer's business;<sup>ii</sup>
- Virginia Voter Photo ID.<sup>iii</sup>
- Voter confirmation documents
- A copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document containing the name and address of the voter

Valid (i.e., genuine) Virginia Driver's licenses can be expired (no date limitation), other photo IDs can be used to vote up to one year after the ID has expired.

Unless otherwise noted, acceptable forms of identification do NOT have to contain a photograph of the voter.

Additional forms of ID can be found here:

<https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formwarehouse/voter-id/outreach-materials/documents/EditedVoter-Identification-Chart-07.2020.pdf>

Virginia recently changed the ID requirement to allow voters to vote a regular ballot without an ID, provided they sign an ID Confirmation Statement affirming their identity.<sup>iv</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?**

Voters must apply to register to vote at least 22 calendar days before the election in which they intend to vote.<sup>v</sup> The deadline to register to vote, or update an existing registration, for the November 2, 2020 General election is **Tuesday October 13, 2020**.

**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?**

No – Virginia does not have Same Day Registration.

**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.

<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 county)</b>	<b>Moved to a different state</b>
<p>The voter should go to their regular polling location. The voter should ask for and fill out a change of address form. <b>The voter can cast a regular ballot.</b></p>	<p>Voters should go to their OLD precinct to vote (unless their registration has been transferred or cancelled).</p> <p>If they moved within the same registrar's jurisdiction and congressional district, they may vote in the following two federal general elections and any intervening elections.</p> <p>If they did not move within the same registrar's jurisdiction and congressional district, they may vote through the next November general election and any intervening elections following their move. They need to ask for and fill out a change of address form. <b>They can cast a regular ballot.</b></p>	<p>Voters should go to their OLD precinct to vote (unless their registration has been transferred or cancelled).</p> <p>If they did not move within the same registrar's jurisdiction and congressional district, they may vote through the next November general election and any intervening elections following their move. They will need to ask for and fill out a change of address form. <b>They can cast a regular ballot.</b></p>	<p>"A person who is qualified to vote, except for having moved from Virginia after the 30th day before a presidential election, may vote in their old precinct for the presidential election ONLY and only for the President and Vice President."</p>

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

Voters who have temporarily moved and intend to return to their Virginia residence may vote by mail via an absentee ballot. See Question 19.

**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?**

College students who meet the registration requirements may register to vote where they go to school. Students can establish residency in Virginia if they have a present intent to remain at their Virginia school address for the time being, and they intend to make it their principal home.<sup>vi</sup> More information can be found here: <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/registration/college-student-info/index.html>

A college student votes in the same manner as any other registered voter: you may vote in person on Election Day or, if eligible, by absentee.

Students who will be absent from the locality where they are registered to vote because they attend school in another locality are eligible to vote absentee.

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

If you are an absent military or overseas citizen eligible to vote in state and local elections, you may register to vote and submit an absentee ballot application electronically for a specific election or any elections up through the next year using the Department of Elections [voter registration portal](#) at <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/citizen-portal/>

Please note that a driver's license or identification card issued by the Virginia DMV is required to complete the process paperlessly. If you do not have a DMV-issued ID, you may also apply by using the federal postcard application (FPCA), available at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov). You can submit your FPCA by scanned email attachment to [info@elections.virginia.gov](mailto:info@elections.virginia.gov) or via fax to (804) 371-0194. Detailed instructions are provided in the [Virginia Voting Assistance Guide](#) at <https://www.fvap.gov/guide/chapter2/virginia>. FPCA's are valid for all elections in the calendar year in which they are submitted and must be renewed annually.

If you do not receive your state ballot in time, you may vote using a Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB), available at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov). You can identify all of the state, local offices and, if applicable, ballot measures that, as of this date, are expected to be on the ballot by visiting the [Candidate Lists](#) and visit ELECT's [Citizen Portal](#) to view your voter registration status.

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

A person who has been convicted of a felony in state court may register to vote and vote only if their rights have been restored. The current and preceding Governors of Virginia have prioritized rights restoration and have been restoring rights of formerly incarcerated Virginia residents on an ongoing basis. **If a person has a felony conviction in Virginia, they may check on the status of their restoration at the Secretary of the Commonwealth's Restoration of Rights webpage (<https://solutions.virginia.gov/RestorationOfRights/Search>).** If a person has a felony conviction in a state other than Virginia, that person must first have their rights restored in that state before being able to register to vote in Virginia.<sup>vii</sup>

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

If a voter is confined awaiting trial or confined following conviction for a misdemeanor, they may vote absentee by mail, even if it is their first time voting and they registered to vote by mail. See other sections for more information on registering to vote and voting absentee by mail.

**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 a voter is not found on the rolls of the polling place where the voter is attempting to vote, the precinct must contact the general registrar to make sure the voter is registered, that their registration has not been cancelled, and that they are in the correct precinct. Upon verification of registration, the voter will then have to sign a statement attesting that they are qualified and registered to vote in that precinct, and then must be allowed to vote a **regular** ballot.<sup>viii</sup>

If the poll worker is unable to confirm that the voter is eligible to vote at a particular precinct, but that voter believes they are, that voter can cast a provisional ballot.<sup>ix</sup> However, if it is later determined that the voter was at the wrong precinct, then the provisional ballot will NOT count.<sup>x</sup>

**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?**

Election Protection hotline volunteers can take steps to help to determine why a voter's name is not appearing on the list of registered voters:

- Check the voter's registration status using the registration lookup tool to make sure they are registered to vote and at the right place. (See [Question #1.](#))
- Has the voter moved recently? Could they be registered at an old address? Check that address in the registration lookup tool. (See [Question #1.](#))
- Has the voter changed their name recently, or could they be registered under a different name? Check that name (and any variations of the voter's name, especially for hyphenated names, which sometimes trip up databases) in the registration lookup tool. (See [Question #1.](#))
- When/where did the voter register to vote? Was that before the deadline?

As a reminder, the deadline to register to vote in Virginia in the November 3, 2020 election is 5:00 p.m. on October 13, 2020. If it is before this deadline, and a voter is not coming up as registered, the voter should (re) register.

A voter's name can only be removed from the list of registered voters by their written request, conviction of a felony, death, adjudication of incapacity, or following receipt of notice from the voter's new jurisdiction of residence if such voter has moved from Virginia or registered to vote outside of Virginia subsequent to such voter's registration in Virginia.<sup>xi</sup> A registrar may also cancel a person's registration if that person is not a U.S. citizen, based on information from the Department of Motor Vehicles or from the Department of Elections.<sup>xii</sup>

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

The Department of Elections also undergoes regular voter list maintenance. If it appears from information provided by the United States Postal Service or another reliable source that a voter has moved to a different city or county, or in any event no longer resides at their address of registration, the Department or the general registrar shall send to the last known address of the voter a prepaid and pre-addressed return card on which the voter may state his current address. If the general registrar does not receive this return card within thirty days after it is sent to the voter, the registered voter's name shall be placed on inactive status.<sup>xiii</sup> Voters on inactive status are still registered, qualified voters and are entitled to vote a regular ballot.<sup>xiv</sup>

Once placed on inactive status, a voter may return to active status if, on or before the day of the second general federal election after assignment to inactive status, the voter: 1) notifies the registrar of a change of address; 2) responds to the confirmation notice that the voter continues to reside at the registration address; 3) votes or attempts to vote in a primary, special, or general election and corrects the registration record if necessary; or 4) transfers registration to another county or city within Virginia. If none of these actions are taken on or before the second general federal election after the voter was placed on inactive status, the registrar shall cancel the person's voter registration.<sup>xv</sup>

---

## 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?**

Yes, voters can vote early, in person at their local registrar's office beginning 45 days before Election Day (Saturday, September 19, 2020 for the November 3, 2020 election) and ending the Saturday before Election Day (October 31, 2020).<sup>xvi</sup>

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

No, you do not have to have a reason to vote early.

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

Voter's should contact their local registrar for hours. Registrar's phone numbers can be found at <https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation/PublicContactLookup>

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

At the voter's local registrar's office or a satellite voting location. Registrar's phone numbers can be found at <https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation/PublicContactLookup>



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

Voters must show an acceptable form of ID (see question 3) or sign an ID Confirmation Statement. Otherwise, a provisional ballot will be offered and voters are allowed until noon on the Friday following the election to appear and provide a copy of acceptable identification to the electoral board or sign an ID Confirmation Statement. Provisional voters receive a notice to remind them of the deadline and right to attend the electoral board meeting.

---

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

---

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

Virginia voters must request an absentee ballot (or absentee ballot by mail). Ballots can be requested by registered voters online at <https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation/Lookup/absentee> OR by downloading and completing a “Vote by Mail” application form, which can be found at <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formwarehouse/absentee-voting/applications/Annual-Absentee-703-Form-Revised-4820.pdf>, forms in Spanish, Vietnamese, and Korean can be found at <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/registration/voter-forms/>.

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

The deadline to request an *absentee ballot by mail* is **Friday, October 23, 2020**. The request must be **received** by the voter’s Registrar by 5:00 p.m.

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

Completed and signed paper requests for absentee ballots can be sent to your local registrar's office by mail, fax, or scanned attachment to an email. Contact information for your local general registrar's office is available at <https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation/PublicContactLookup>

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

Virginia has two types of *emergency* absentee voting in under certain circumstances:

You were unable to meet the absentee by mail deadline of Friday October 23, 2020, due to your hospitalization or illness; the hospitalization, illness, or death of a spouse, child, or parent; or another emergency found to justify an emergency absentee ballot. The best course of action here is for the voter or a designated representative to call their local BoE/registrar.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

- Deadline to request an emergency absentee ballot is prior to 2:00 pm on the day preceding the election (Monday, Nov. 2, 2020)
- If you are approved for an emergency ballot, your general registrar shall provide the absentee ballot to your designated representative for delivery to you
- You shall mark the ballot in the presence of your designated representative
- The ballot shall be counted only if the ballot is received by the general registrar prior to the close of polls

A change of plans after noon on the Saturday before the election (October 31, 2020, the day in person early voting closes) – either an officer of election who was assigned after noon on that Saturday to work in a precinct other than their own; or an obligation arose after noon on that Saturday due to 1) your business, profession, or occupation; 2) the hospitalization of you or a member of your immediate family; or 3) the death of a member of your immediate family. The voter must apply and vote *in person* by 2:00 pm on the day preceding the election (Monday, Nov. 2, 2020).

Applications for both can be found at <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/casting-a-ballot/absentee-voting/>.

If possible for the voter, EP volunteers should encourage any voter who can vote in person to either vote in early voting, if the voter is calling on or before the Saturday before election day (October 31, 2020), or on election day.

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

No. Virginia recently expanded early voting to allow absentee by mail without a stated reason, provided the request is made prior to Friday, October 23, 2020.<sup>xvii</sup>

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

Virginia voters may use the following websites to track their ballot for the 2020 November General Election:

At the Citizen Portal at <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/citizen-portal/>

OR

<https://ballotscout.org/partners/5a8f1161-23a0-4fa0-8ec9-3e090e97e9b3/va-search>

Ballot Scout is an application that tracks ballots sent through the mail using USPS Intelligent Mail barcodes. It was created by Democracy Works, a nonpartisan nonprofit organization, and is used here in partnership with your local election office. Ballot Scout tracks mail-in ballots and provides transparency for voters and election officials into where mail-in ballots are located, and ensures each vote is counted.

Note – this site may only track the ballot from the DoE/ registrar to the voter, not from the voter to the DoE/registrar

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

The voter or the EP volunteer and the voter, should call the voter’s local registrar’s office to ask why the ballot was rejected, and if prior to October 23, 2020, how to fix such errors to request a new one.  
<https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation/PublicContactLookup>

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

The absentee ballot should be completed and returned to your local registrar by 7:00 p.m. on Election Day. If you are returning your ballot by-mail, it must be postmarked on or before Election Day and received by your registrar by noon on the third day after the election.

Certain voters who are voting for the first time by mail in the federal election may have to send a copy of their ID if they did not send a copy with their voter registration. These voters will receive a notice and must include a copy of the following with their ballot (note, this does NOT have to be a photo ID):

1. A current and valid photo ID (for example a driver’s license);
2. or a current utility bill, bank statement, government check or paycheck that shows name and address;
3. or another government document that shows name and address (for example a voter card).

If such a voter returns an absentee ballot, the ballot will be treated as a provisional ballot and counted only if the voter provides a copy of their ID to the board

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

If a voter lost their ballot, they may go to their polling place or an early voting site, and can cast a **provisional ballot** after providing a signed statement that they did not receive the ballot or have lost the ballot, subject to felony penalties for making false statements. <sup>xviii</sup>

If the voter has spoiled their ballot or received an “unfit” ballot, they may either return the spoiled or unfit ballot to the general registrar before Election Day, or return their unused ballot to the polling place or central absentee voter precinct on Election Day. **The voter is then entitled to vote a regular ballot.**<sup>xix</sup>

If possible, the voter should take the spoiled ballot to their polling place/absentee ballot when voting in person, rather than returning it to the general registrar or an officer of election prior to voting, to ensure that the ballot is properly counted as spoiled, as if the general registrar or an officer of election is unable to confirm the return of the defaced ballot, the voter shall be entitled to cast a provisional ballot.

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

On Election Day, a voter who is shown on the poll book as having applied for an absentee ballot, but has not received the ballot, may cast a provisional ballot in person at their polling place. They may be required to sign a “goldenrod form” swearing they never received an absentee ballot a provisional ballot.<sup>xx</sup> During early voting, voters who signed the goldenrod form were permitted to cast a regular ballot during early voting, but on Election Day, they will have to vote a provisional ballot.

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

If the voter received an absentee ballot, but decides to vote in person instead, they may return the unused ballot to the polling place or central absentee voter precinct on Election Day. The voter is then entitled to vote a **regular** ballot. Advise the voter not to open the absentee ballot if they have not already done so, and to bring all the parts of the ballot (including envelopes) if they did open it. If the pollworker cannot confirm that the complete ballot is being returned unused, they may require the voter to cast a provisional ballot.

If the voter has spoiled their ballot or received an “unfit” ballot, they may return the spoiled or unfit ballot to the polling place or central absentee voter precinct on Election Day. The voter is then entitled to vote a **regular** ballot. Advise the voter to bring all the parts of the ballot (including envelopes. If the pollworker cannot confirm that the complete ballot is being returned, they may require the voter to cast a provisional ballot.

If a voter lost or did not receive their ballot, they may go to their polling place or an early voting site, and cast a **provisional** ballot after providing a signed statement that they did not receive the ballot or have lost the ballot, subject to felony penalties for making false statements.<sup>xxi</sup>

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

Completed ballots must be returned to the voter’s local registrar by 7:00 p.m. on Election Day. If returning by mail, it must be postmarked on or before Election Day and received by the voter’s registrar by noon on the third day after the election.

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

Completed ballots may be dropped off at the local Office of Elections, during the dates and times that the Office of Elections is open. During the dates and times that any satellite locations are open for absentee in person/early voting, voters can return their ballot to the satellite locations. Contact your local election authority for the locations and hours of operation.

The Virginia General Assembly has also approved the use of drop boxes at precincts and satellite locations. Some counties are providing drop boxes for absentee by mail ballots, and EP volunteers can offer to look up this information for callers, as the location/times of such drop boxes will likely change.

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

Only the voter themselves can drop off their ballot at the registrar's office, but there are no prohibitions or restrictions on who drops off the voter's ballot at a ballot drop box.

According to the VA state code, while a voter can mail a completed ballot to the registrar or deliver it personally, this shall not include delivery by a personal courier service or another individual except in the case of:

1) Replacement absentee ballots for a voter with a disability or illness who has applied for and has been sent an absentee ballot who did not receive or has lost the absentee ballot on or before the Saturday before the election may obtain a replacement absentee ballot. In this case, a voter may request a replacement absentee ballot by the close of business for the local elections office on the Saturday before election day and designate, in writing, a representative to obtain a replacement absentee ballot on his behalf from the general registrar and to return the properly completed ballot as directed by the general registrar no later than the close of polls on the day of election for which the absentee ballot is valid. The representative must be 18 or older, and not be an elected official, a candidate for elected office, or the deputy, spouse, parent, or child of an elected official or candidate. The voter and representative shall complete the form prescribed by the State Board to implement the provisions of this section. The form shall include a statement signed by the voter that he did not receive the ballot or has lost the ballot. Statements on the form shall be subject to felony penalties for making false statements.<sup>xxii</sup>

Or

2) Emergency absentee ballots, wherein a voter was unable to meet the absentee by mail deadline of Friday October 23, 2020, due to hospitalization or illness; the hospitalization, illness, or death of a spouse, child, or parent; or another emergency found to justify an emergency absentee ballot. <sup>xxiii</sup> The best course of action here is for the voter or a designated representative to call their local BoE/registrar.

- Deadline to request an emergency absentee ballot is prior to 2:00 pm on the day preceding the election (**Monday, Nov. 2, 2020**)
- If you are approved for an emergency ballot, your general registrar shall provide the absentee ballot to your designated representative for delivery to you
- You shall mark the ballot in the presence of your designated representative
- The ballot shall be counted only if the ballot is received by the general registrar prior to the close of polls

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

*See above for early in-person voting*

---

## HOW TO VOTE: ELECTION DAY

---

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

Polls in Virginia are open from 6:00am to 7:00pm. As long as a voter is in line at or before 7:00 pm, they are permitted to vote.

**\*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?

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. Voters should be advised to check the polling place listed on the Voter Notification Card they received from the local election authority a few days before the election.

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

See question 3, which lists forms of acceptable identification (does not have to be a photo ID).

If a voter has forgotten their ID, they may sign an ID statement affirming their identity. If a voter does not have an ID and refuses to sign an ID statement, they may vote provisional, but must appear in person by noon on the Friday following the election to provide a copy of acceptable identification to the electoral board or sign an ID Confirmation Statement. Provisional voters receive a notice to remind them of the deadline and right to attend the electoral board meeting.

---

## POLLING PLACE ISSUES

---

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

Voters should immediately notify election officers if the polling place is not open. If voters can wait, they should wait until the election officials open the polling location.

**\*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. If you are in line when the polls close, you must be allowed to vote!

**\*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?**

Voters should immediately notify election officers if voting equipment breaks down while the polls are open. A voter can use a paper ballot, and should request one if it is not offered.<sup>xxiv</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?**

Voters should notify election officers.

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

Yes. Voting information and instructions should be posted at each active voting place. In addition, a voter may request instruction for the proper use of the voting system from an officer of election. The officer should provide technical instruction to the voter but shall not seek to influence or intimidate the voter in any manner.<sup>xxv</sup>

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

**It should be.** There is at least one voting machine accessible to voters with disabilities at each polling place. Voters with a disability should be able to vote in the same private and independent manner as a voter without a disability.<sup>xxvi</sup>

Virginia polling places, including early voting locations, meet state and federal accessibility standards. You can find:

- Accessible parking spaces
- Curbside - where needed – see Question 44
- Signs showing an accessible entrance and route in building
- Accessible voting booth with chair
- Seating available for voters waiting to vote
- Sufficient space for voters in wheelchairs
- Notepads available to communicate in writing
- Magnifier for election material and the ballot

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

Yes. If blind, a voter is entitled to have an officer of election or any other person of their choice provide assistance. Any voter who is unable to read and write or disabled for any cause other than blindness is entitled to have an officer of election or any other 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.<sup>xxvii</sup>

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

If you are 65 or older or physically disabled, you are entitled to request that an officer of election hand you a printed ballot outside the polling place but within 150 feet of the entrance to the polling place. You should mark the printed ballot in the officer's presence but in a secret manner. The officer of election shall immediately return to the polling place and shall deposit a paper ballot in the ballot container or a machine-readable ballot in the ballot scanner machine.<sup>xxviii</sup>

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

Generally, campaigning and "hanging around" outside polling places is prohibited within 40 feet of the entrance. People may not approach voters in an attempt to influence their vote within this area. During the time the polls are open and ballots are being counted, it is unlawful for anyone to loiter or congregate within 40 feet of any entrance of any polling place. Furthermore, it is prohibited to display any ballots, tickets, or campaign material within this distance, or to solicit or influence any person in casting their vote. It is also prohibited to hinder or delay a voter from entering or leaving a polling place.<sup>xxix</sup> Prior to opening the polls, the officers of the election shall post notices in the area within 40 feet of any entrance to the polling place indicating this area is a "Prohibited Area."<sup>xxx</sup>

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

Any qualified Virginia voter may challenge the qualifications of any other Virginia voter. If someone officially challenges a voter through a signed challenge, the officer of elections will explain to the voter the required qualifications and may question the voter on their eligibility. If the challenged voter insists they are qualified, and the challenge is not withdrawn, the voter must sign a statement swearing that, to the best of their knowledge, the voter is not disqualified from voting, has not previously voted in this election, and is the person they say they are. If the challenged voter refuses to sign this statement, they will not be permitted to vote. If the challenged voter does sign this statement, they must be permitted to vote a regular ballot, unless they were otherwise required to use a provisional ballot.<sup>xxxi</sup>

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

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



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

Inquire why the voter was offered a provisional ballot. A voter should only be offered a provisional ballot when:

- The voter does not have the required ID and refuses to sign an ID Confirmation Statement;<sup>xxxii</sup>
- The voter's name is not in the poll book, the voter believes they registered in that precinct and the registrar's office cannot be contacted to verify the voter's registration (see [Question 12](#));<sup>xxxiii</sup>
- The voter's name is marked in the poll book to indicate that they have already voted in person;<sup>xxxiv</sup>
- The voter applied for or has been sent an absentee ballot, but never received or lost the absentee ballot and attempts to vote in person;<sup>xxxv</sup> or
- The polling hours are extended by court order and the voter was not already in line by the time the polls would have otherwise closed (7:00 pm ET).<sup>xxxvi</sup>

Other than for these reasons, the voter should be able to cast a regular ballot. **A provisional ballot should be a last resort.** If the voter must cast a provisional ballot, remind the voter to ask the poll worker if any additional steps will be needed to make sure that the ballot is counted.

---

## QUESTIONS

---

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

Voters should contact their local Registrar at their local Office of Elections (these names may vary depending on the city or county). This contact information can be found at:

<https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation/PublicContactLookup>

- 
- <sup>i</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-643(B); <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/casting-a-ballot/in-person-voting/>
- <sup>ii</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-643(B).
- <sup>iii</sup> Virginia Department of Elections, “Photo ID Required to Vote,” <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/registration/photo-ids-required-to-vote/>; Free Photo ID Application: <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/voter-photo-id/outreach-materials/ELECT-404-ID-VoPhoIDCardApp-Long.pdf>.
- <sup>iv</sup> <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/registration/photo-ids-required-to-vote/> and <https://www.13newsnow.com/article/news/local/virginia/gov-northam-signs-legislation-that-repeals-virginia-vote-id-law-makes-election-day-state-holiday/291-1c4ef0d1-1578-4646-b7b9-93350c29315a>
- <sup>v</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-416.
- <sup>vi</sup> See Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-101 (“Residence” definition); see *Dunn v. Blumstein*, 405 U.S. 330, 330 (1972); *Williams v. Salerno*, 792 F.2d 323, 328 (2d Cir. 1986).
- <sup>vii</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-427(B)(2); Va. Const. Art. II § I. For additional information on restoration of voting rights for the formerly incarcerated in Virginia, visit <https://revivemyvote.wm.edu/>.
- <sup>viii</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-652.
- <sup>ix</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-653(A).
- <sup>x</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-653(B).
- <sup>xi</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-427(B).
- <sup>xii</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-427(B1).
- <sup>xiii</sup> Va. Code Ann. §§ 24.2-428; 24.2-428.1.
- <sup>xiv</sup> Va. Code Ann. §§ 24.2-101 (definitions of “Qualified voter” and “Registered voter”); 24.2-428.2.
- <sup>xv</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-428.2.
- <sup>xvi</sup> <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/casting-a-ballot/absentee-voting/>
- <sup>xvii</sup> <https://www.13newsnow.com/article/news/local/virginia/gov-northam-signs-legislation-that-repeals-virginia-vote-id-law-makes-election-day-state-holiday/291-1c4ef0d1-1578-4646-b7b9-93350c29315a> and <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/casting-a-ballot/absentee-voting/>
- <sup>xviii</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-708(B) and § 24.2-653.1.
- <sup>xix</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-708(C).
- <sup>xx</sup>
- <sup>xxi</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-708(A).
- <sup>xxii</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-703.2.
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-705.
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-642(C).
- <sup>xxv</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-647.
- <sup>xxvi</sup> <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/casting-a-ballot/accessible-voting/>
- <sup>xxvii</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-649(B).
- <sup>xxviii</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-649(A).
- <sup>xxix</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-604(A).
- <sup>xxx</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-604(B).
- <sup>xxxi</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-651.
- <sup>xxxii</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-643(B).
- <sup>xxxiii</sup> Va. Code Ann. §§ 24.2-652, 24.2-653(A).
- <sup>xxxiv</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-651.1.
- <sup>xxxv</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-653.1.
- <sup>xxxvi</sup> Va. Code Ann. § 24.2-653.2.