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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.

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REGISTERING TO VOTE

1. STATUS: Am I registered to vote?

A person can determine whether he or she is registered to vote by checking the Vermont Secretary of State's website "My Voter Page" (<https://mvp.sec.state.vt.us/>). The information required to check voter registration status is first name, last name, and date of birth.

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

You can register to vote online through the Vermont Secretary of State's Online Voter Registration System (<https://olvr.vermont.gov/>). Note that If you are registering to vote in Vermont for the first time, you must include a photocopy of an acceptable form of ID. Acceptable forms of ID include a valid photo ID (driver's license or passport), a copy of a current utility bill, a copy of a current bank statement, or a copy of a government check, paycheck or other government document showing your current name and home address.

You can also register by mail to vote. You do so by printing a voter registration form, filling it out, and mailing it to your local election office. The voter registration form is available on the Vermont Secretary of State's website (<https://sos.vermont.gov/media/nesb43yw/2017-voter-app.pdf>). A Guide to Local Election Offices is available on the Vermont Secretary of State's website (<https://sos.vermont.gov/media/vh1jv3oj/2019townclerkguide.pdf>).

Those without access to a computer and/or printer can register in person to vote by visiting a clerk's office. A Guide to Local Election Offices is available on the Vermont Secretary of State's website (<https://sos.vermont.gov/media/vh1jv3oj/2019townclerkguide.pdf>).

Voters may also register to vote simultaneously with their application for, or renewal of, a driver's license. Voters will also be offered an opportunity to register whenever you apply for benefits from a designated agency in state government.

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

When registering to vote, you must include your Vermont driver's license or Vermont Personal ID number on the form. If you do not have a Vermont driver's license or Personal ID, include the last 4 digits of your Social Security number. If you do not have either, please contact the Office of the Secretary of State, Elections Division, (800) 439-8683.

If you are registering to vote for the first time in Vermont, and mailing the Voter Registration form to your town clerk individually or submitting it online, you must also submit a photocopy of one of the following forms of identification: current & valid photo identification, bank statement, utility bill, or government document that contains your current name and home address.

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?

There is no deadline. Voters may register to vote on any day up to and including the day of election at the polling place or online, provided they meet the eligibility requirements for voting. If you would like to register to vote by mail or online, there is no specific deadline. However, it is recommended you submit your application between 2-4 weeks before an election to ensure your application is processed before the election. If the voter’s application is not processed in time, the voter may be asked to fill out an application at the polling place. *See Same Day Voting (#5) below.*

Registration is available during all normal business hours of your town or city clerk’s office on days preceding the election and during polling hours on Election Day. 17 V.S.A. § 2144

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?

Yes. Voters may register to vote on any day up to and including the day of election at the polling place or online, provided they meet the eligibility requirements for voting. However, if a voter registers online the day before the election or on Election Day, the voter’s application may not be processed in time and the voter may be asked to fill out an application at the polling place.

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

You can register and vote if you have moved to Vermont from another state. As soon you move to Vermont you can vote if Vermont is your primary residence.

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

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

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

If the voter has moved to a different municipality, the voter retains the right to vote at the polling place of the voter's former residence for up to 17 days following the move. After 17 days following the move to a new municipality, the voter must register to vote in the municipality of his/her new address and vote at the polling place of their new residence. *See Permanent Move (#No. 6) above.*

If you are living out of state temporarily you can continue to vote in Vermont where you were last living as long as you consider that location your primary residence and have a specific intent to return. You can contact the town or city clerk and ask that they send you an absentee ballot. The ballots can be sent to you as early as 45 days prior to a primary or general election, and 20 days prior to a local election.

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

Yes, students attending college in Vermont may register at their campus address or choose to remain registered or register at their permanent or home address. If a student is taking classes remotely and physically resides in Vermont, the student can register to vote using the address of his or her residence in Vermont. He or she can vote using any of the methods listed above.

If you are living out of state temporarily—for example, for college—you can continue to vote in Vermont where you were last living as long as you consider that location your primary residence and have a specific intent to return. You can contact the town or city clerk and ask that they send you an absentee ballot. The ballots can be sent to you as early as 45 days prior to a primary or general election, and 20 days prior to a local election.

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

If you are living out of state temporarily—for example, for military service—you can continue to vote in Vermont where you were last living as long as you consider that location your primary residence and have a specific intent to return. You can contact the town or city clerk and ask that they send you an absentee ballot. The ballots can be sent to you as early as 45 days prior to a primary or general election, and 20 days prior to a local election.

Military or overseas voters who are in a country for which mail service to the US has been suspended, and who have no other means of returning their ballot by mail, may return their ballot directly to the Clerk by email. The marked ballot should be returned as a PDF or photo file attached to an email to the Clerk. A photo or scanned image of a signed certificate containing the language included on the standard absentee ballot certificate envelope shall be returned by the voter along with the ballot. The LEO shall notify the Secretary of State's office prior to allowing any military or overseas voter to return their ballot by this method.

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

Yes. Any person may register to vote in the town of his/her residence who on Election Day is a citizen of the United States, a resident of Vermont, has taken the voter's oath, and is at least 18 years old. 17 V.S.A. §2121.

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

Yes. Currently incarcerated individuals may vote. Those individuals may register in the town in which they resided before being incarcerated.

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 for any reason your name is not on the voter registration list when you arrive at the polls, you can simply fill out a registration form and vote that day. Vermont has same day voter registration.

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?

If for any reason your name is not on the voter registration list when you arrive at the polls, you can simply fill out a registration form and vote that day. Vermont has same day voter registration.

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

Note that you can take steps to help to determine why a voter's name is not popping up on the list of registered voters:

- Check the voter's registration status using the registration lookup tool to make sure he/she is registered to vote and at the right place (see [Question #1](#)).
- Has the voter moved recently? Could he/she be registered at an old address? Check that address in the registration lookup tool (see [Question #1](#) and [Question #6](#)).
- Has the voter changed his/her name recently, or could he/she be registered under a different name? Check that name (and any variations of the voter's name, including hyphenated names, which sometimes trip up databases) in the registration lookup tool (see [Question #1](#)).
- When/where did the voter register to vote? Was that before the deadline?

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

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?

Vermont voters can vote before Election Day through a process called absentee in-person voting. The period for absentee in-person voting runs from Monday, September 21, 2020 to Monday, November 2, 2020.

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

No, no reason or excuse is required.

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

You may vote at your town clerk's office in person any time 45 days before a primary or general election. Clerk hours may vary by town. Local town or city clerk offices can be found here: (<https://sos.vermont.gov/media/vh1jv3oj/2019townclerkguide.pdf>).

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

You may vote at your town clerk's office in person any time 45 days before a primary or general election. Local town or city clerk offices can be found here: (<https://sos.vermont.gov/media/vh1jv3oj/2019townclerkguide.pdf>). You can also pick up a ballot at your local town or city clerk office and take it home to vote. Then return your voted ballot to the clerk's office before Election Day or drop it off at a polling place on the day of the Election.

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

In Vermont, only first-time voters who have registered by mail or online have to show ID in order to vote. Acceptable forms of ID include a valid photo ID (driver's license or passport), a copy of a current utility bill, a copy of a current bank statement, or a copy of a government check, paycheck or other government document showing your current name and home address.

If you registered when you renewed your driver's license, or as part of a voter registration drive, you will not be required to show 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? How do I request one?

Any voter can request that the town clerk mail them an early voter absentee ballot. Once voted, you can return the ballot to the clerk in the envelope included with the ballot. The clerk must receive the ballot by the close of the polls on Election Day to be counted.

For the **November 3, 2020 General Election**, the Secretary of State will issue absentee ballots to all registered voters in the state. If a voter does not receive an absentee ballot from the Secretary of State, voters should contact their town clerk's office for further information about obtaining an absentee ballot. (<https://sos.vermont.gov/media/vh1jv3oj/2019townclerkguide.pdf>).

If you are sick or have a disability, an absentee ballot can be delivered to your home. Voters may request an absentee ballot until 5:00 p.m. on the day before Election Day. Under COVID-19 changes to election procedures, however, in-home delivery of ballots by Justices of the Peace is only required if a town or city has two Justices of the Peace that are willing, able, and available to provide this service. Voters wanting in-home delivery of an absentee ballot should contact their town clerk's office to confirm the continued availability.

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

The deadline for requesting an absentee ballot is by 5:00 p.m. or the closing time of the town clerk's office the day before the election. You can request an absentee ballot through phone, fax, email, mail, in person or online. You should contact your town clerk to see if there is time to mail you an absentee ballot. If there is not, you may want to collect that ballot in person or vote in person.

Any voter can request that the town clerk mail them an early voter absentee ballot. Once voted, you can return the ballot to the clerk in the envelope included with the ballot. The clerk must receive the ballot by the close of the polls on Election Day to be counted. You can request a ballot at any time before an election and clerks will mail absentee ballots within the 45 days before the election. The ballots must be mailed "forthwith" (as soon as possible) after an application for a ballot has been filed with the clerk and the clerk has received the ballots from the printer. Early voter absentee ballots that are sent to voters who are outside of the country must be sent airmail, first class, postpaid, when such service is available.

For the November 3, 2020 General Election, the Secretary of State will issue absentee ballots to all registered voters in the state. If a voter does not receive an absentee ballot from the Secretary of State, voters should contact their town clerk's office for further information about obtaining an absentee ballot. (<https://sos.vermont.gov/media/vh1jv3oj/2019townclerkguide.pdf>).

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

You can request an absentee ballot through phone, fax, email, mail, in person or online. An early or absentee voter, or an authorized family member or health care provider acting in the voter's behalf, may apply for an early voter absentee ballot by telephone, in person, or in writing. "Family member" means a person's spouse, children, brothers, sisters, parents, spouse's parents, grandparents, and spouse's grandparents.

For the November 3, 2020 General Election, the Secretary of State will issue absentee ballots to all registered voters in the state. If a voter does not receive an absentee ballot from the Secretary of State, voters should contact their town clerk's office for further information about obtaining an absentee ballot. (<https://sos.vermont.gov/media/vh1jv3oj/2019townclerkguide.pdf>).

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

All requests must be submitted by 5 p.m. or the close of the Town Clerk's office on the day before the election. If you do not meet the deadline, you can vote at your polling location on election day. You should contact your town clerk to see if there is time to mail you an absentee ballot. If there is not, you may want to collect that ballot in person or vote in person.

If you did not request an absentee ballot in time to vote, you can vote in person (either early at the town clerk's office or on the day of the election at the polling place).

For the November 3, 2020 General Election, the Secretary of State will issue absentee ballots to all registered voters in the state. If a voter does not receive an absentee ballot from the Secretary of State, voters should contact their town clerk's office for further information about obtaining an absentee ballot. (<https://sos.vermont.gov/media/vh1jv3oj/2019townclerkguide.pdf>).

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

No, no reason is required.

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

Vermont has an online system that allows voters to check their absentee ballot status. It is available on Vermont's Secretary of State website, on the My Voter Page. (<https://mvp.vermont.gov/>)

Voters will have to create an account and sign in to view this information.

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?

If your absentee ballot was rejected, you can contact your town clerk to obtain another ballot, vote in person at the clerk's office, or vote on the day of the election at your designated polling place.

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

Follow the instructions included with the ballot to complete it.

Once voted, you can return the ballot to the clerk in the envelope included with the ballot. The clerk must receive the ballot by the close of the polls on Election Day to be counted.

No identification is required.

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

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

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

For the upcoming general election on November 3, 2020, all active voters should receive a ballot in the mail the last week of September. If you do not receive your ballot by October 1, contact your town clerk. If you have otherwise requested an absentee ballot and have not received it, contact your town clerk.

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

You can vote in person at your local polling place. You should bring your ballot with you. However, if you do not, you will be allowed to vote if you fill out an affidavit affirming you have not voted already.

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

Vermont law does not allow late-arriving ballots postmarked by Election Day to be counted. To return a ballot by mail, Vermont recommends mailing it 7-10 days before election day. For the upcoming November 3, 2020 General Election, Vermont advises all voters to mail ballots no later than October 24th. After that, you can drop off your ballot to your town clerk in person or deliver it to the polls by 7 p.m. on election day.

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

You can drop off your ballot to your town clerk in person or deliver it to the polls by 7 p.m. on election day. The ballot must be delivered to your town clerk during normal business hours before election day or to the polls by 7 p.m. on election day.

Many clerks have ballot drop boxes. Contact your local clerk for drop box and ballot return options during office hours in your town.

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

An absentee ballot may be hand delivered by the voter or by anyone authorized by the voter to hand deliver the ballot with certain exceptions related to candidates on the ballot in the November 3, 2020 election and members of their campaign staff. Candidates who are on the ballot and members of their campaigns staff may only return their own ballots, the ballots of closely related family members or ballots of their campaign staff members. (See, <https://sos.vermont.gov/media/hxgjidkb/secretary-of-state-s-first-2020-statewide-election-procedures-directive.pdf>).

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

Vermont voters can vote before Election Day through a process called absentee in-person voting. The period for absentee in-person voting runs from Monday, September 21, 2020 to Monday, November 2, 2020.

You may vote at your town clerk's office in person any time 45 days before a primary or general election. Local town or city clerk offices can be found here: (<https://sos.vermont.gov/media/vh1jv3oj/2019townclerkguide.pdf>).

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?

All polls are open by 10 a.m. Some polls open earlier. All polling places close at 7 p.m. See 17 V.S.A. §2561. An individual who is in line at the time polls close must be allowed to vote. Vermont State Legislature, 17 V.S.A. § 2561.

***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?

Visit your voter page at mvp.vermont.gov for the location (and directions) to your polling place or visit the interactive polling place map page. (<https://sos.vermont.gov/elections/voters/polling-places/>) You can also download a statewide polling place list (at <https://sos.vermont.gov/elections/voters/polling-places/>) or contact your town clerk for additional information.

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?

In Vermont, only first-time voters who have registered by mail or online have to show ID in order to vote. Acceptable forms of ID include a valid photo ID (driver's license or passport), a copy of a current utility bill, a copy of a current bank statement, or a copy of a government check, paycheck or other government document showing your current name and home address.

If you are unable to provide ID, you may register in person at the polls and will simply need to provide your VT driver's license number or the last four digits of your social security number.

If you registered when you renewed your driver's license, or as part of a voter registration drive, you will not be required to show ID.

POLLING PLACE ISSUES

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

Check to make sure the location of the polling place has not changed and that you are voting between the hours of the specific polling location. The location of a polling place may be changed no less than 15 days prior to the election. Contact your local town or city clerk to verify the location of polling places (<https://sos.vermont.gov/media/vh1jv3oj/2019townclerkguide.pdf>).

After verifying the hours and location, you can contact the Vermont Secretary of State, Elections Division at 1-800-439-8683.

***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?

Stay in line and wait for your turn to vote. An individual who is in line at the time polls close must be allowed to vote. Vermont State Legislature, 17 V.S.A. § 2561.

***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 can contact the Vermont Secretary of State, Elections Division, at 1-800-439-8683

***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?

Vermont is enforcing PPE and COVID-19 precautions at the polling places. Elections workers have been issued PPE, masks are required for voters and polling places have been set up to accommodate physical distancing. If a mask is required to enter a polling location, LEOs should make disposable masks available.

If a polling place is not enforcing precautions, voters can contact the Vermont Secretary of State, Elections Division, at 1-800-439-8683

If a voter refuses to wear a mask to enter that location, an alternative means of casting a ballot must be provided to the voter. Voters may be provided a ballot and certificate envelope in order to vote their ballot outside or in their vehicle and may return the voted ballot to an election official in the signed certificate envelope to be brought inside the polling place and processed.

Other reasonable alternative procedures may be implemented that allow a voter who refuses to wear a mask to cast their ballot in a distanced area within the polling place, if possible, or without entering inside the polling place.

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

Yes. A voter who needs assistance to register a vote on a machine shall be assisted by a person of the voter's choice, other than the voter's employer, an agent of the employer, or an officer or agent of the voter's union. Alternatively, a voter can receive help from two election officials of different party affiliations.^{vii}

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

Vermont's election laws are designed to make it easy for all eligible Vermonters to vote and to register to vote. One of the specific purposes of the Vermont Election Laws is "to provide equal opportunity for all citizens of voting age to participate in political processes" 17 V.S.A. §2101.

Beginning in 2018, Vermont introduced a new accessible voting system. This is a tablet-based system that will mark the voter's selections onto the same paper ballots used by all voters at the polls, increasing the privacy and independence of the vote for a voter with disabilities. The system also contains an online-based ballot marking interface which will enable voters with disabilities to vote privately and independently from home during the early voting period.

In addition to the accessible voting system, if you need accommodations to assist you with voting, you may: (1) Contact your Town Clerk to request accommodations; (2) Bring a person of your choice into the voting booth with you for assistance (not your employer or union representative); (3) Ask an election official for assistance with marking your ballot; (4) Ask an election official to bring a ballot to your car; (5) Bring a magnifying glass or other devices to help you use the ballot; (6) Bring a list of candidates into the voting booth to help you; and (7) Ask for another ballot (maximum of 3) if you make a mistake.

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. Any voter who needs assistance voting is entitled to have some person of his/her choice (other than the voter's employer, an agent of the employer, or an officer or agent of the voter's union) mark the voter's choices or assist the voter in marking his/her choices on the ballot. Alternatively, a voter can receive assistance from two election officials of different party affiliations.^{viii}

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

Curbside voting is always available for those with disabilities or the elderly. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Secretary of State has issued a directive permitting outdoor and drive-through polling places (and drive-through polling places must accommodate walk-up voters).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

There is no prohibition on the presence of law enforcement at the polling site. However, voters have the right to vote without anyone intimidating them, trying to influence their vote within the polls, or interfering with their progress to or from the polling place. If the voter feels the law enforcement presence is intimidating, call the Election Protection Hotline at 1-866-OUR-VOTE (1-866-687-8683) or the Vermont Secretary of State, Elections Division, at 1-800-439-8683.

***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?

Use of provisional ballots in Vermont is very rare. A person who is not on the checklist but asserts they submitted an application prior to the deadline is now provided an affidavit to swear to that fact. If they are willing to do so under the penalty of perjury, they are allowed to vote.

Since it is very rare that someone is not on the checklist, does not assert they applied on time, but still demands to vote, the provisional ballot is rarely needed. It is only used if a person demanding to vote at the polling place is not on the checklist and the voter cannot affirm they registered to vote by the deadline.

QUESTIONS

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

Voters can contact the Vermont Secretary of State, Elections Division, at 1-800-439-8683, or contact their local town clerk. (<https://sos.vermont.gov/media/vh1jv3oj/2019townclerkguide.pdf>)

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- i 17 V.S.A. §2149.
 - ii 17 V.S.A. §2122.
 - iii 17 V.S.A. §2122.
 - iv 17 V.S.A. §2150.
 - v 17 V.S.A. §2148.
 - vi 17 V.S.A. §2548.
 - vii 17 V.S.A. §2569.
 - 20 <https://www.sec.state.vt.us/elections/voters/absentee-voting.aspx>.
 - 21 17 V.S.A. §2531
 - viii 17 V.S.A. §2569.
 - ix 17 V.S.A. §2508.