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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?

You can determine whether you are registered by checking the Texas Secretary of State's website (<https://teamrv-mvp.sos.texas.gov/MVP/mvp.do>) or by calling the voter registrar's office in the county where you reside (phone numbers are available at <https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/votregduties.shtml>).

You can confirm your status on the website by using (1) your Voter Unique Identifier (VUID), which appears on your voter registration certificate; (2) your Texas driver's license number, if you provided it when you applied for voter registration; or (3) your first and last name.

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

You can apply to register to vote by mail, by fax, or in person.¹ Voters cannot register online in Texas.

Mail or Fax: If applying to register by mail or fax, you can fill out an application online, print it, and mail or fax it to your voter registrar's office. If registering by fax, a copy must be submitted by mail and received no later than four business days after the faxed version is received.²

- The voter registration application is available at <https://webservices.sos.state.tx.us/vrapp/index.asp>.
- The addresses for all voter registrar's offices are available at <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/votregduties.shtml>.

In-Person: If applying to register in-person, you can register at your local registrar's office (<http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/votregduties.shtml>) or with a Volunteer Deputy Registrar (there is no central database of Volunteer Deputy Registrars, who are appointed by county registrars to assist in registering voters; they are often individuals associated with a campaign or local organization).

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

You do not need identification to *register* to vote. However, you will need to provide one of the following: your Texas driver's license number or your Texas Personal I.D. number, or, if you do not have one of those forms of ID, the last four digits of your social security number. If you do not have any of these three types of information, you will need to check a box stating that you do not have a license number, a

¹ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 13.143(d)(1-2).

² TEX. ELEC. CODE § 13.002(a).

personal identification number, or social security number. For information on the identification required to vote, see Question 35.

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?

General Election: For the 2021 General Election being held on November 2, 2021, the deadline to register to vote is October 4, 2021.

You must register to vote 30 days before Election Day.³ If the 30th day before the date of an election is a Saturday, Sunday, or a legal state or national holiday, an application is considered to be timely if you submit it to the registrar on or before the next regular business day.⁴ But even if you may have missed this year's voter registration deadline, there are important elections in just a few months (in March) and you should register now if eligible.

5. NO SAME DAY REGISTRATION: Does my state have Same-Day Registration (i.e. I can register to vote the same day I vote)?

Texas does *not* have same-day registration. The registration deadline for the 2021 General Election is *October 4, 2021*—in Texas, you must be registered at least 30 days before any election.⁵

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

If you moved within the same county where you are currently registered, you must file the new address information in writing with your county voter registrar OR you may submit the "in county" change online. The last day to make a change of address that will be effective for the **November 2, 2021** Election is **October 4, 2021**. If you missed this deadline, you may return to your old precinct to vote, if you still live in the political subdivision holding the election.

Note: if you live in a county that uses "countywide polling," then you can still vote at any precinct in your county and don't have to return to a particular one. You can see whether you live in a "countywide polling" county at this website

<https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/countywide-polling-place-program.shtml>.

If you moved within the county and missed the deadline to update your address, **you will have to go back to the precinct in which you are currently registered (your "old" precinct)**, and, at that location, you will be required to complete a "statement of residence" confirming your new address. This will act to update your registration information for the future. You will then be allowed to vote a regular ballot as long as you are otherwise eligible. [Same note above regarding countywide polling counties].

If you moved to a "**new county**," you must re-register in your new county of residence by **October 4, 2021**, to be eligible to vote in the **November 2, 2021 Election** (unless you are eligible to vote a "limited

³ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 13.143(a); *see* TEX. ELEC. CODE § 13.002.

⁴ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 13.143(e).

⁵ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 13.143.

ballot,” see below). If you moved from another state or county in the last 30 days and were registered there, you may vote in the old state or county for President and Vice President only.⁶

LIMITED BALLOT OPTION: If you have moved to a new county and have not re-registered in the new county by the **October 4, 2021** deadline, you may be eligible to vote a limited ballot in your new county. A limited ballot means that you would be allowed to vote on any candidates and measures in common between your former county and new county. **This procedure is only available during the early voting period at the main early voting polling place;** you may **NOT** vote a limited ballot on election day. You must be a current registered voter in your former county in order to qualify OR you must have been registered in your old county at the time you submitted a voter registration application in your new county, if you have done so. For full information on this procedure (including the by-mail option, if qualified to vote by mail), go to [Special Procedures for Early Voting](#). If you feel you qualify to vote a limited ballot, we recommend that you contact the office of the [Early Voting Clerk](#) in your new county.

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

Texas does not have any specific rules for a temporary move. If your principal residence hasn't changed but you are unable to vote in-person in that precinct, you may be eligible to vote an absentee/mail-in ballot (see Question 22).

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?

If you attend college in Texas, you may register and vote in Texas if you plan on staying in Texas for the time being and consider it your home. If you attend college outside of Texas, you are still considered a Texas resident if the move is temporary for school and you intend to make Texas your home afterwards.⁷ For more information, please refer to the Texas Secretary of State's website: <https://www.votetexas.gov/voting/#students>.

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

U.S. citizens living outside of the United States and active uniformed service members (and their eligible dependents) may request a mail-in ballot under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA).⁸ Step-by-step assistance and forms are available at <https://www.votetexas.gov/military-overseas-voters/>.

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

⁶ 52 U.S.C. § 10502(e)

⁷ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 1.015. *See generally* United States v. Texas, 445 F. Supp. 1245, 1261–62 (S.D. Tex. 1978), *aff'd* 439 U.S. 1105 (1979); *see also* Dunn v. Blumstein, 405 U.S. 330, 330 (1972); Williams v. Salerno, 792 F.2d 323, 328 (2d Cir. 1986).

⁸ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 105.001.

Felony: If you have been *convicted* of a felony (and there is no appeal pending), you cannot vote in Texas *unless* you have fully discharged your sentence (including any term of incarceration, parole, probation, or supervision) or have been pardoned.⁹ However, if you have been charged with—but *not convicted* of—a felony, you *may* vote if you are otherwise eligible and register to vote.

Non-Felony: You can vote if you have been convicted of a misdemeanor or other non-felony offenses.

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

If you are otherwise eligible to vote, you do not lose that eligibility just by being in jail. However, you may only vote *early by mail* if you are currently in jail. To learn how a criminal conviction or charge impacts your eligibility to vote, see Question 10.

This includes individuals who are:

- Serving a misdemeanor sentence for a term that ends on or after election day;
- Pending trial after denial of bail;
- Without bail pending an appeal of a felony conviction; or
- Pending trial or appeal on a bailable offense for which release on bail before Election Day is unlikely.

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?

Note that you can take steps to help to determine why a voter's name is not 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?*

If this occurred by mistake, and you have the required identification (see Question 35) and your voter registration certificate, you can cast a **regular ballot** if you present your voter registration certificate (which must show that you are registered in that precinct or a different precinct within the same county).

If you are voting in a different precinct within the same county, you must also provide a written statement that:

- 1) you are currently a resident in the precinct in which you're voting;
- 2) you were a resident of that precinct at the time your address was last provided to the voter registrar;
- 3) you did not provide false information; and
- 4) you are only voting once in the election.¹⁰

⁹ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 11.002(a)(4).

¹⁰ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.006(a).

If your county participates in Countywide Polling (list found [here](#)), you can vote in any precinct in the county. If not, and you do not have a voter registration certificate and your name is not on the list of registered voters, you may vote by provisional ballot (*voting by provisional ballot should be a last resort*).

¹¹ You must also sign an affidavit according to the instructions for casting a provisional ballot listed in Question 35.

If you moved to a new county, where you were not registered, and did not register in time, you may vote a limited ballot (described above) in the new county during the Early Voting period.¹² You must submit a registration application for the new county at the time of casting the limited ballot. The limited ballot will only include candidates and measures that are common between your former county and your new county.

The Secretary of State or local voter registrar may have removed your name from the rolls for any of the following reasons:¹³

- Notice that you reside in a county other than the one you are registered in;
- Notice that you are deceased;
- Evidence of a final court judgment regarding your mental incapacity to vote;
- Evidence of a final court judgment regarding your felony conviction;
- Notice that you have applied for a limited ballot in another county;
- Notice that you have registered to vote in another state;
- Notice that you have registered to vote in another county;
- Notice that you are not a U.S. citizen;¹⁴ or
- A written, signed request from you to cancel your registration.¹⁵

If you are notified that your registration has been cancelled, you may challenge the cancellation by submitting a written, signed request to the voter registrar for a hearing.¹⁶ The voter registrar will notify you of the date, time, and place of the hearing.¹⁷ Each county's process for challenging a cancellation is different—either check the notice you received, if you have it, to find out what the procedure is for challenging a cancellation, or contact your county voter registrar.

HOW TO VOTE: EARLY VOTING—IN-PERSON

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

Yes, Texas has early, in-person voting, and also allows voters to vote early by mail (in Texas, this is no longer referred to as “absentee voting”).

¹¹ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.009.

¹² TEX. ELEC. CODE § 112.002.

¹³ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 16.031.

¹⁴ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 16.0332(a).

¹⁵ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 16.0331.

¹⁶ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 16.062.

¹⁷ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 16.065.

In-Person: Any registered voter can vote ***in-person*** before Election Day from **October 18th to October 29th**.¹⁸ Voters eligible to vote by mail (see Question 22) can also apply to vote by mail if they submit an application by October 22; the application must be received by the county elections office (either by mail or in person) by that date.

14. ELIGIBILITY: Do I have to have a reason to vote early in-person?

In-Person: Any registered voter can vote early in-person.¹⁹

By Mail: Voters must have a reason to vote early by mail—see Question 22 for the requirements.

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

The dates and hours that Early Voting polling places are open will vary based on where the voter lives. The locations and times of Early Voting polling places for the voter’s specific county may be found by looking up the voter’s registration record at <https://teamrv-mvp.sos.texas.gov/MVP/mvp.do> (there will usually be links on the right next to the voter’s registration record) or going to the county election website.

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

The locations and times of Early Voting polling places for the voter’s specific county may be found by looking up the voter’s registration record at <https://teamrv-mvp.sos.texas.gov/MVP/mvp.do> (there will usually be links on the right next to the voter’s registration record) or going to the county election website.

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

You must provide acceptable photo identification to vote early. The same identification rules for Election Day apply to early voting. See Question 35.

***Note to hotline volunteer:** In Texas, “vote by mail,” “mail-in voting,” and “absentee voting” are the same thing (whereas in some states there are differences between them). “Absentee voting” is not a common term in Texas: in person early voting is usually referred to simply as “early voting,” and mail voting as “vote by mail” or “mail-in voting.”

¹⁸ TEX. ELEC. CODE §§ 81.001(a)-(b).

¹⁹ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 82.005.

HOW TO VOTE: EARLY VOTING—VOTE EARLY BY MAIL (aka ABSENTEE)

18. REQUESTING A MAIL-IN BALLOT: Do I have to request an absentee/mail-in ballot or will my state mail me one automatically? How do I request one? Do I have to request one for every election?

You must request/apply for a mail-in ballot for *each election* in order to receive one. Voters aged 65 or older or disabled voters may also make a single request/application to receive a mail-in ballot for every election in a calendar year.²⁰

You can obtain a mail-in ballot application on the Secretary of State Division of Elections website (<http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/>), at the Secretary of State's office (Texas Secretary of State P.O. Box 12887 Austin, TX 78711-2887), at your local election office (<https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/county.shtml>), or, in some counties, on the website of your local election office.

You may send in your application for a ballot by mail by:²¹

- Regular mail;
- Common or contract carrier (FedEx/UPS, etc.);
- Faxing a scanned application (with original signature, no e-signature);²²
 - Voters sending by fax MUST also mail the application to their local election office, who must receive it within four business days of the fax being received;
- Emailing a signed application (with original signature);²³ or
 - Voters sending by email MUST also mail the application to their local election office, who must receive it within four business days of the e-mail;
- Personal delivery.

19. APPLICATION DEADLINE: What is the deadline for requesting an absentee/mail-in ballot?

The mail-in ballot application *must be received* by the local election office no later than the close of business on October 22nd (for the 2021 General Election).²⁴ If applying via fax or email, a physical copy must be mailed and received no later than four business days after the fax/email is received.

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

You can mail or hand-deliver your application to your local election office, which can be found here: <https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/voter/county.shtml>.

²⁰ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 86.0015.

²¹ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 84.007.

²² TEX. ELEC. CODE § 84.007.

²³ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 84.007.

²⁴ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 84.007; Tex. Elec. Code § 84.008.

If you e-mail or fax your application per Question 19 above, you must *also* mail a copy to the local election office, who must receive the mailed copy within four business days.

You may have a person assist you with filling out and mailing a vote-by-mail application. *However*, only the voter may hand-deliver his or her vote by mail application.²⁵ Unless they are a close relative or a person registered to vote at the same address, anyone who helps you complete the application must fill out the assistant information on the application for ballot by mail, by providing their own name, residence address, and signature.²⁶

If you cannot sign the application because of a physical disability or inability to read or write in English, you are eligible under Texas law to have a witness fill out a portion of the form at the bottom stating that to be true. The witness and assistant can be the same person.²⁷

21. DIDN'T REQUEST IN TIME: What if I have not requested an absentee/mail-in ballot by the deadline?

You cannot receive a mail-in ballot if you missed the deadline. The deadline to request a mail-in ballot for the 2021 General Election is October 22nd; for more information, see Question 19.

22. ELIGIBILITY: Do I have to have a specific reason for requesting to vote by absentee/mail-in ballot?

Yes, voters must fall into one of the following categories to vote by mail:

- You will be away from your county on Election Day and during Early Voting;
- You have a sickness or physical condition that prevents you from appearing at the polling place on election day without a likelihood of needing personal assistance or of injuring your health;
- You are expecting to give birth within three weeks before or after election day; ²⁸
- You are 65 years of age or older on Election Day; or
- You are confined in jail, but eligible to vote, as discussed in Question 11.²⁹

Note that concern about COVID-19 alone does *not* qualify you to vote by mail. However, the Texas Supreme Court has ruled that lack of immunity to COVID-19 can be considered as a factor in your decision as to whether voting in person will create a likelihood of injury to your health, but it cannot be the only factor. You do not qualify to vote by mail just by having a “fear” of contracting COVID-19 but are otherwise healthy. To qualify, you must have an accompanying physical condition.

Additionally, active uniformed service members (and their eligible dependents) and U.S. citizens living outside of the United States may request a mail-in ballot under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA).³⁰ (Step-by-step assistance and forms are available [here](#)).

²⁵ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 84.008.

²⁶ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 84.003.

²⁷ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 84.003.

²⁸ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 82.002.

²⁹ TEX. ELEC. CODE §§ 82.001-004.

³⁰ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 105.001.

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

There is no statewide tracker available, but counties offer different tracking services.

- County Trackers: [Williamson, Bexar, Harris, Travis, Bastrop, McLennan](#)
- FPCA (Overseas Military) [Tracker](#)

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

If you believe it was rejected in error, reach out to your local election office (<https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/county.shtml>).

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

There are no identification requirements for completing the mail-in ballot in this election (that will change under Texas's new election law, which goes into effect on December 2, 2021). Be sure to carefully read the instructions that come with your mail in ballot and fill out all required parts of the form, and make sure it is received by your county election office by the required deadline (see Question 29 for those deadlines)

26. LOST OR SPOILED: What if I lost my absentee/mail-in ballot or it is spoiled or I received an incorrect one?

If you lost or spoiled your mail-in ballot, you can reach out to your local election office to see if they can cancel the first ballot and send you another one. If time is tight, you can cancel your absentee ballot at your county election office (or, in some counties, at a polling site itself, if early voting has begun) and vote in person early or on Election Day. Because your cancellation options depend on when during the elections process you try to cancel your ballot and whether you received a ballot or not, you should reach out to your local election office immediately to discuss which options are available to you (<https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/county.shtml>).

As a last resort, you may be able to cast a provisional ballot in-person either during early voting or on Election Day. The provisional ballot will be counted once the county determines they never received your mail-in ballot and that you are otherwise eligible.

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

If you never received your mail-in ballot, you can reach out to your local election office to see if they can cancel the first ballot and send you another one. If time is tight, you can cancel your absentee ballot at your county election office (or, in some counties, at a polling site itself, if early voting has begun) and vote in person early or on Election Day. Because your cancellation options depend on when during the elections process you try to cancel your ballot, you should reach out to your local election office immediately to discuss which options are available to you (<https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/county.shtml>).

As a last resort, you may be able to cast a provisional ballot in-person either during early voting or on Election Day. The provisional ballot will be counted once the county determines they never received your mail-in ballot and that you are otherwise eligible.

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

If you requested a mail-in ballot but instead choose to vote in person, you must request a cancellation of your mail-in ballot. A voter may cancel their mail-in ballot and vote in-person by submitting a signed request, in writing, to the local election office, specifying the election for which the application was made. The cancellation request must be received three days before the election and before the mail-in ballot is returned to the early voting clerk as a marked ballot.

Alternatively, a person may cancel their vote by mail application after early voting has ended by appearing in person at their county elections office and returning their mail ballot or executing an affidavit stating that they have not received the ballot to be voted by mail.

Finally, a person may also go to a polling place during early vote or on Election Day and turn over their mail ballot, and then vote in person.

Note: You **cannot** change your vote after you have already submitted your mail-in ballot.

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

The early voting clerk must receive your marked ballot by the close of polls on Election Day (7 p.m.) if not postmarked.³¹ If your ballot is postmarked by 7 p.m. on Election Day, it must be *received* by 5 p.m. the following day (November 3rd).

If your ballot is submitted from outside the United States or you are in the military, the mail-in ballot must be postmarked by Election Day, but will be accepted if it is received by November 8 [the 5th day after Election Day (or the next business day if the 5th day is a weekend or holiday)].³²

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

A voter may drop off a completed ballot *in the envelope it came with* to a site designated by the local election office on Election Day.³³ In-person drop off must be completed while the polls are open. A voter who delivers a completed ballot in-person must present an acceptable form of identification (see Question

³¹ TEX. ELEC. CODE ANN. § 86.007.

³² TEX. ELEC. CODE § 86.007; § 41.031. *See also* <https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/important-election-dates.shtml#2020>.

³³ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 86.006.

35).³⁴ Contact your local election office for the exact location for dropping off your ballot. Contact information here: <https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/voter/county.shtml>.

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

No. For in-person delivery, only the voter may deliver their ballot in person. The voter who delivers a completed ballot in person must present an acceptable form of identification (see Question 35).³⁵

32. IN-PERSON ABSENTEE: Where do I vote in-person absentee? Can I vote my mail-in ballot in-person?

Anyone can vote early in person during the early voting period (see Question 13); there are several options for voting in person even if you applied for and received a mail-in ballot (see Question 28), and you can also drop your completed mail-in ballot off in person on Election Day (see Question 30).

Note: “in-person absentee” is not a commonly used term in Texas, and voters are likely to ask “Where can I vote early” or “Where can I vote early in person.”

HOW TO VOTE: ELECTION DAY

33. 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 7:00 p.m. local time on Election Day.³⁶ A voter inside or waiting to enter the polling location by 7:00 p.m. is entitled to vote.³⁷

**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.

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

You can determine the voter’s polling location by looking up the voter’s registration record at <https://teamrv-mvp.sos.texas.gov/MVP/mvp.do> (there will usually be links on the right next to the voter’s registration record) or going to the county election website. (<https://teamrv-mvp.sos.texas.gov/MVP/mvp.do>).

Note: voters anywhere in Texas can vote at any location in their county during early vote, and a voter in a “countywide voting” county can vote at any location in the county on Election Day. You can see a list of

³⁴ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 86.006.

³⁵ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 86.006.

³⁶ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 41.031(a).

³⁷ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 41.032(a).

the counties who are using countywide voting at this link:

<https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/countywide-polling-place-program.shtml>

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 that voters may have used in the past 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.

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

If you have one of the following forms of photo identification, you must present it at the polling place in order to vote.³⁸

- Driver's License issued by Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS);
- Texas personal identification card issued by DPS;
- Texas Election Identification Certificate issued by DPS³⁹;
- US military identification card with photo;
- US Citizenship Certificate with photo;
- US Passport (book or card); or
- Texas license to carry a handgun issued by DPS.

Except for the U.S. citizenship certificate (which does not expire), **the identification must be current or have expired within the past four years.** Therefore, voters aged 18-69 may use an expired ID so long as it has expired within the past four years. If you are 70 or older, you may use an expired ID listed above regardless of how long it's been expired, if the identification is otherwise valid.⁴⁰

If you cannot reasonably obtain the forms of identification listed above, you may provide a signed document (under oath) stating your reasonable impediment to obtaining photo ID, and present the following:⁴¹

- A government document that shows your name and an address, including your voter registration certificate;
- One of the following showing the voter's name and address:
 - A copy of a current utility bill;
 - A bank statement;
 - A government check;
 - A paycheck; or
- A certified copy of a domestic birth certificate or other legally admissible document confirming birth and establishing the person's identity.

If you have ID or one of the above alternatives, you will receive a regular ballot. If you have an

³⁸ TEX. ELEC. CODE ANN. § 63.0101. *See also* information on photo ID available at <https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/id/acceptable-forms-of-ID.pdf>.

³⁹ *See* <https://www.dps.texas.gov/section/driver-license/election-identification-certificate-eic>.

⁴⁰ TEX. ELEC. CODE ANN. § 63.0101(c).

⁴¹ TEX. ELEC. CODE §§ 63.001(b)(2); 63.0101(b).

acceptable ID but have not brought it, you may vote provisionally. You will then have six (6) days to present a photo ID listed above to the county voter registrar. You can also receive a provisional ballot based on a natural disaster (as declared by the president or the governor) or religious objection to being photographed affidavit.⁴²

While election officials may ask you if you have an acceptable photo ID, election officials cannot question or challenge you concerning your lack of that ID. Election officials cannot question the reasonableness of your difficulty in obtaining photo ID.⁴³

Note: If the name on the voter list does not exactly match the name on your identifying documentation, the voter can vote by regular ballot so long as the names are substantially similar and the voter submits an affidavit statement swearing that they are the person on the list of registered voters.⁴⁴

Your address on either the photo ID or the alternative documentation does not need to match your address on the voter registration list.⁴⁵

POLLING PLACE ISSUES

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

**Note to hotline volunteer:* First, double-check to confirm with the voter that they are at the correct polling location and confirm that the county website lists this location as a polling place for this election. If you learn of a polling place not opening on time or is closed, notify your hotline captain immediately.

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

A voter inside or waiting to enter the polling location by 7:00 p.m. is entitled to vote (see Question 33).⁴⁶ Please stay in line!

**Note to hotline volunteer:* If you learn of long lines, notify your hotline captain immediately. Please ask the voter if they know the reason for the long lines (voting machine issues, lack of poll workers, etc.) and the number of voters waiting in line/if any voters have left without voting.

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

You should immediately notify election officers if there are problems with the voting equipment at your polling location. The presiding election judge at the polling location must use the remaining operational equipment unless the judge determines doing so will substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of the

⁴² TEX. ELEC. CODE § 65.054; TEX. ELEC. CODE § 65.0541.

⁴³ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.001(d).

⁴⁴ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.001(c).

⁴⁵ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.001(c-1).

⁴⁶ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 41.032(a).

election. In this case, the judge may choose to use regular or early voting paper ballots on Election Day in addition to or instead of the remaining operational equipment.⁴⁷ You should request a regular paper ballot if not offered.

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

***Note to field volunteer:** Notify the boiler room, which will then notify a voting machine expert.

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

Texas polling places need not enforce COVID-19 precautions.⁴⁸ There may be local laws that may require face coverings, hand sanitizer, and disinfectant wipes.

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

Yes. Texas law permits election officials to provide you with general information on how to cast your ballot.⁴⁹ In addition, polling places must have an instruction poster displayed both at each voting station and in at least one other location at the polling place where the poster can be read by those waiting to vote. The poster must include instructions for:

- Marking and depositing the ballot;
- Voting for a write-in candidate;
- Casting a provisional ballot; and
- Securing an additional ballot if the voter's original ballot is spoiled.⁵⁰

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

Yes. Each polling place is required by law to be accessible and usable by persons with physical disabilities and provide at least one voting station that allows for practical and effective use.⁵¹

Despite these requirements, many polling places are not accessible. If you are physically unable to enter the polling place without personal assistance or likelihood of injuring your health, you may request that an election officer deliver a ballot to you at the polling place entrance or curb (this is known as "curbside voting").⁵² After marking the ballot, you can give it to an election officer or you can request that a person accompanying you be permitted to select and cast your ballot in the ballot box instead of an election officer.⁵³ However, you must mark your own ballot (unless you are also entitled to "assistance" in voting, see Question 42).⁵⁴

⁴⁷ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 125.006(c).

⁴⁸ See <https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2020-19.shtml>.

⁴⁹ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 61.009; see *Carter v. White*, 161 S.W.2d 525, 525 (Tex. Civ. App. 1942).

⁵⁰ TEX. ELEC. CODE ANN. § 64.007; see TEX. ELEC. CODE § 62.011.

⁵¹ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 43.034; § 61.012.

⁵² TEX. ELEC. CODE § 64.009.

⁵³ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 64.009.

⁵⁴ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 64.009.

Note: If you plan to go alone to vote curbside, it is wise to call ahead so that election officials can prepare.

42. 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 person of your choice—other than your employer, an agent of your employer, or an officer or agent of your union—may assist you in marking your choices on the ballot.⁵⁵ If you do not want to select your own assistant, election workers are required to assist you – on Election Day, two election workers will assist you.⁵⁶

- *If the voter cannot speak English or communicates only with sign language*, an interpreter can assist them in communicating with election officials, regardless of whether the election official(s) attending to the voter can speak the same language as the voter. The voter may select any person other than the voter’s employer, an agent of the voter’s employer, or an officer or agent of a labor union to which the voter belongs.
- *If the voter cannot read the languages on the ballot*, the interpreter may also assist by translating the language on the ballot for the voter in the voting booth.
- *If the voter is deaf and does not have a sign language interpreter who can accompany them to help communicate with the poll worker or read the ballot*, the voter should contact his or her local election officials before the election and request assistance.

All counties must provide voting materials in both English and Spanish. In addition, federal and Texas law require that bilingual ballots, instructions, voting materials, and poll workers be made available to voters who speak a different language in certain counties:⁵⁷

- Chinese: Harris County
- Kickapoo: Maverick County
- Pueblo: El Paso County
- Vietnamese: Harris County
- Vietnamese: Tarrant County

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

If you are unable to enter the polling place without personal assistance or likelihood of injuring your health, you may request that an election officer deliver a ballot to you at the polling place entrance or curb.⁵⁸ You may also request that a person accompanying you be permitted to select and cast your ballot in the ballot box instead of an election officer.⁵⁹ However, you must mark your own ballot (unless you are also entitled to “assistance” in voting, see Question 42).⁶⁰ See also Question 41 for more about curbside voting.

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

⁵⁵ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 64.032(c).

⁵⁶ TEX. ELEC. CODE §§ 64.032(a)-(b).

⁵⁷ 52 U.S.C.A. § 10508; TEX. ELEC. CODE §§ 272.001–272.011; Voting Act Amendments of 2016, Determinations Under Section 203, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2016-12-05/pdf/2016-28969.pdf>.

⁵⁸ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 64.009.

⁵⁹ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 64.009.

⁶⁰ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 64.009.

People may not loiter or electioneer within 100 feet of any polling place.⁶¹ The voter has a right to vote without anyone trying to influence their vote in any way while at the polling location. This specifically prohibits anyone from wearing candidates' apparel within 100 feet of a polling place. Poll workers have the authority to enforce these rules under Tex. Elec. Code §§ 61.003 and 85.036. In addition, people may not electioneer via sound amplification within 1,000 feet of the building in which a polling place is located.⁶²

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

Texas allows any registered voter to “challenge” the registration of any other voter in the same county.⁶³ If your registration is challenged, the county will send you a “confirmation notice” requesting that you confirm your current residence. The confirmation notice must include a prepaid, preaddressed “confirmation notice response form” that provides space for you to confirm your current residence and submit additional voter registration information. If you receive one of these forms, you must complete, sign, and return it within 30 days of the date that the county mailed you the notice.

If you do not respond within 30 days of the date that the county mailed you the notice, you may be placed on the “suspense list.” This means that you can still vote, but that you will have to confirm your current residence before doing so. If you confirm your current residence by mailing back the form, the county will remove your name from the suspense list, and you will return to the regular list of registered voters. If you do not confirm your current residence and have your name removed from the “suspense list” by November 30 following the second general election, the county may cancel your voter registration.

You can also confirm your address in writing when you show up at the polls to vote and you will be removed from the suspense list that way.

You can also check the status of your voter registration at:
<https://teamrv-mvp.sos.texas.gov/MVP/mvp.do>.

If your registration or right to vote is being challenged or any other reason including citizenship, call the 1-866-OUR-VOTE Hotline.

46. 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.

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

⁶¹ TEX. ELEC. CODE ANN. § 61.003. NOTWITHSTANDING MINN. VOTERS ALLIANCE V. MANSKY, 138 S. CT. 1876 (2018), THE TEXAS SECRETARY OF STATE APPEARS TO TAKE THE POSITION THAT THE BAN ON ELECTIONEERING REACHES MATERIALS EXPRESSING PREFERENCE FOR OR AGAINST CANDIDATES NOT ON THE CURRENT BALLOT. SEE STEPHANIE WHITFIELD, IS MAGA APPAREL ALLOWED IN POLLING PLACES, [HTTPS://WWW.KHOU.COM/ARTICLE/NEWS/LOCAL/IS-MAGA-APPAREL-ALLOWED-IN-POLLING-PLACES/285-609690946](https://www.khou.com/article/news/local/is-maga-apparel-allowed-in-polling-places/285-609690946) (OCT. 31, 2018). SEE ALSO [HTTPS://WWW.SOS.STATE.TX.US/ELECTIONS/LAWS/ADVISORY2018-11.SHTML](https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2018-11.shtml).

⁶² Tex. Elec. Code § 61.004

⁶³ TEX. ELEC. CODE ANN. § 16.091.

A provisional ballot should be a last resort.

Ask why you were offered a provisional ballot. Typically, you should be offered a provisional ballot only when:⁶⁴

- You do not have the proper identification;
- Your name is not on the list of registered voters for the polling location and your voter registration cannot be verified while at the polling location; or
- You applied for an Early Voting/mail-in ballot and did not vote early by mail.

Other than for these reasons, you should cast a regular ballot.

Before receiving the provisional ballot, you must complete an affidavit stating that you are eligible to vote in that precinct. If you cast a provisional ballot because you do not have the required identification, an election officer must give you written information explaining the procedure you must follow to have your vote counted.⁶⁵ After the election, the Early Voting ballot board will determine whether your ballot will be

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counted.

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

For more information, you can:

- i. Reach out to your local election office (<https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/county.shtml>);
- ii. Call the voter registrar's office in the county where you reside (phone numbers are available at <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/votregduties.shtml>); or
- iii. Check out the TX Secretary of State's website for voting (<https://www.votetexas.gov/index.html>).

⁶⁴ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.011.

⁶⁵ TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.001(g)(2).