Frequently Asked Questions

Texas – General Election 2026

Last Updated: 10/28/2026

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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.

VOTER REGISTRATION | ELECTION DAY | EARLY VOTE | VOTE BY MAIL

ABSENTEE | POLLING PLACE ISSUES | ACCESSIBILITY /ASSISTANCE | STATE SPECIFIC SUPPLEMENT

Table of Contents

VOTER REGISTRATION

1. **ELIGIBILITY:** Can I register to vote?
2. **PRIMARY ELECTION:** Can I vote in the primary election? Do I need to be registered with a political party? Can I change my party registration to vote in another party's primary election? When I voted, the poll worker asked my party affiliation. Are they allowed to do that?
3. **STATUS:** Am I registered to vote? What do I need to do if my name has changed since I registered? I am listed as inactive, what does that mean and what do I need to do?
4. **HOW:** How do I register to vote? Can I register online? Do I need a printer? Can I register to vote in person?
5. **IDENTIFICATION:** What ID is required to register to vote?
6. **DEADLINES:** When is/was the voter registration deadline? Are there different deadlines whether I register by mail, in-person, or online?
7. **SAME DAY:** Does my state have Same Day Registration? If so, what is the process?
8. **PERMANENT MOVE:** I have moved permanently and I didn't update my voter registration, can I vote?
9. **TEMPORARY MOVE:** I have moved temporarily. How can I vote?
10. **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?

11. **LIVING ABROAD:** I am living abroad and/or serving in the military. How can I register and/or vote?
12. **CRIMINAL CONVICTION:** I have a felony criminal conviction. Can I register to vote? Does the type of conviction matter? Are there any restrictions after any misdemeanor convictions? What process (if any) is needed to restore my right to vote if it was impacted?
13. **INCARCERATED:** I am currently incarcerated. Can I register to vote? Can I vote from jail?
14. **REGISTRATION CHALLENGED:** My registration has been challenged, what should I do?

HOW TO VOTE: ELECTION DAY

15. **HOURS:** When do the polls open/close on Election Day?
16. **POLLING LOCATION:** Where do I vote on Election Day?
17. **TIME OFF WORK:** Is my employer required to give me time off to vote? Is it paid or unpaid?
18. **CLOSING:** What if the polls close when I am already in line?
19. **IDENTIFICATION:** What identification is required to vote?
20. **NO IDENTIFICATION:** Can I vote without providing identification?
21. **NOT ON ROLLS AT MY POLLING PLACE:** I am at my polling place but am not showing up on the voter registration roll. Can I vote where I am?
22. **GIVEN PROVISIONAL BALLOT:** I am being told I have to vote provisionally, what does that mean?
23. **REQUESTING PROVISIONAL BALLOT:** I am being told I can't vote, can I vote provisionally?
24. **PROVISIONAL BALLOT NEXT STEPS:** I voted a provisional ballot, what now?

HOW TO VOTE: IN-PERSON EARLY VOTING (In this state, defined as: early voting in person)

25. **AVAILABILITY:** Is there early voting in my state (whether called early voting or something else)?
26. **ELIGIBILITY:** Do I need to have a reason to vote early?
27. **WHEN:** When does early voting begin/end?
28. **WHERE:** Where do I vote during early voting?
29. **IDENTIFICATION:** What identification is required for early voting? What if I don't have an ID?
30. **ASSISTANCE:** What if I need assistance voting early in person?

HOW TO VOTE: VOTE BY MAIL (In this state, defined as: early voting by mail or mail-in voting)

31. **AUTOMATIC MAIL BALLOT:** Will I automatically be sent a ballot in the mail?
32. **ELIGIBILITY:** Do I need a specific reason to vote by mail?
33. **APPLICATION DEADLINE:** What is the deadline for requesting a mail-in ballot?
34. **APPLICATION ASSISTANCE:** Can someone assist me with filling out the application?
35. **APPLICATION RETURN:** How do I submit my mail-in ballot application? Can someone return it for me? Does it have to be postmarked by a specific date?
36. **IDENTIFICATION:** Are there identification requirements when I return my mail-in ballot application and/or ballot?
37. **RECEIVING MAIL BALLOT:** Does the ballot have to be sent to my home, or can I have it sent somewhere else? What if I don't have a home address or my address is a PO Box?
38. **MISSED THE APPLICATION DEADLINE:** What if I have not requested a mail-in ballot by the deadline?
39. **STATUS OF APPLICATION AND/OR BALLOT:** How can I check the status of my application and/or ballot?
40. **APPLICATION OR BALLOT REJECTED:** I learned my mail-in ballot application and/or ballot was rejected. What can I do to fix any errors or get another one?

41. **COMPLETING BALLOT:** How do I complete the mail-in ballot?
42. **ASSISTANCE COMPLETING BALLOT:** Can someone assist me in filling out my ballot?
43. **DEADLINE TO RETURN BALLOT:** What is the deadline for the ballot to be received? Does it have to be postmarked by a specific date? Can I drop it off in person?
44. **BALLOT DROP OFF LOCATIONS:** What are the locations for dropping off a ballot (instead of mailing it)?
45. **ASSISTANCE DROPPING OFF BALLOT:** Can someone else drop off my completed ballot for me?
46. **LOST OR SPOILED BALLOT:** What if I lost my mail-in ballot, made a mistake on it (spoiled it), or I received an incorrect ballot?
47. **NON-RECEIPT OF BALLOT:** What if I requested a mail-in ballot but have not received it? What are my options for voting?
48. **IN PERSON OPTION:** What if I requested or received a mail-in ballot but I want to vote in person on Election Day?

HOW TO VOTE: ABSENTEE **(In this state, defined as: early voting by mail or mail-in voting)**

49. **ELIGIBILITY:** Am I eligible to request an absentee ballot?
50. **APPLICATION DEADLINE:** What is the deadline for requesting an absentee ballot?
51. **IDENTIFICATION:** Are there any identification requirements?
52. **EMERGENCY:** Is there an emergency absentee ballot? If so, am I eligible?
53. **APPLICATION RETURN:** Where and how can I return my absentee ballot application? Can someone return it for me?
54. **STATUS OF APPLICATION AND/OR BALLOT:** How can I check the status of my absentee ballot application and/or absentee ballot return?
55. **APPLICATION OR BALLOT REJECTED:** I learned my absentee ballot application or ballot was rejected. How can I confirm this and what can I do to fix any errors or get another one?
56. **COMPLETING BALLOT:** How do I complete the absentee ballot?
57. **ASSISTANCE COMPLETING BALLOT:** Can someone assist me filling out the ballot?
58. **BALLOT DEADLINES:** What is the deadline for the ballot to be postmarked and/or received by, including dropping it off in person?
59. **BALLOT DROP OFF LOCATIONS:** Where can I drop off a ballot (instead of mailing it)?
60. **ASSISTANCE DROPPING OFF:** Can someone else drop off my completed ballot for me?
61. **LOST OR SPOILED:** What if I lost my absentee ballot or it is spoiled or I received an incorrect one?
62. **NON-RECEIPT OF BALLOT:** What if I requested an absentee ballot but have not received it?
63. **IN PERSON OPTION:** What if I requested an absentee ballot but I want to vote in person on Election Day?
64. **IN PERSON ABSENTEE:** Where do I vote in-person absentee? When can I do this?

POLLING PLACE ISSUES

65. **POLLING PLACE NOT OPEN:** The polling place is not open. What should I do?
66. **LONG LINES:** There are long lines at the polling place. What should I do? What if the polls are closing while I'm in line?
67. **EQUIPMENT FAILURE:** What should I do if there are equipment problems at my precinct?
68. **CAMPAIGNING:** What rules apply to people campaigning or "hanging around" my polling place? What counts as campaigning or electioneering? Can people approach me?
69. **VOTER CONDUCT:** What am I prohibited from wearing or doing in a polling place? Can I take photos inside?
70. **POLL WORKER CONDUCT:** What is a poll worker prohibited from wearing or doing in a polling place?

71. **INTIMIDATION:** Are there any other specific restrictions on conduct outside of a polling place? What should I do if I feel unsafe or uncomfortable outside the polling place?
72. **CHALLENGE:** Someone is formally challenging my vote. What should I do?
73. **POLICE/MILITARY PRESENCE:** There are police/military at the polling place. Is this okay? What should I do?
74. **THOUGHT WAS REGISTERED:** My name isn't on the voter registration roll but I thought I was registered. What should I do?
75. **PROVISIONAL BALLOT:** I have been offered a provisional ballot. What should I do? (Also see info in the Election Day Voting section above)

ACCESSIBILITY/ASSISTANCE

76. **EQUIPMENT ASSISTANCE:** I don't know how to use the voting equipment. Can I get help?
77. **PHYSICAL DISABILITY:** I have a physical disability and need assistance. Is my polling place ADA compliant? Does my voting location have an accessible voting system?
78. **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?
79. **LANGUAGE ACCESS:** I am not an English speaker. What language resources are available? Can I bring someone in the booth to help me understand the ballot?
80. **CURBSIDE VOTING:** Is curbside voting available? How do I request it?
81. **VOTER GUIDE:** Can I bring a voting guide or reference notes with me into the voting booth?

STATE SPECIFIC SUPPLEMENT **(Anything that is particular/unique about voting in this state that is not captured elsewhere in the document.)**

82. **POLL WATCHER CONDUCT:** What are poll watchers? What can poll watchers do or not do at the polls?
83. **TRANSPORTATION TO THE POLLS:** Can someone else other than the voter provide transportation to the polls to voters?
84. **FIREARMS/HANDGUNS:** Who can bring a firearm/handgun to a polling place?
85. **NATURAL DISASTERS:** What do I do if my ID for voting was destroyed or I can't access it due to a natural disaster?
86. **TEMPORARY RESIDENCE IN SHELTER:** How can I vote if I am staying in a shelter?
87. **TERMINOLOGY:** What election terms are different in Texas?
88. **QUESTIONS:** Who should I contact if I have questions about any of the above?

VOTER REGISTRATION

1. **ELIGIBILITY:** Can I register to vote?

Voters are eligible to register to vote if meet all qualifications:

- The voter is a United States citizen;
- The voter is a resident of the county where the application is submitted;

- The voter is at least 17 years and 10 months old on the date the voter's registration application is submitted, and the voter is at least 18 years of age on Election Day;
- The voter is not "finally" convicted of a felony and is not currently serving out the sentence for a felony conviction, which includes any term of incarceration, parole, or probation (**see note below**); and
- The voter has not been explicitly declared totally mentally incapacitated or partially mentally incapacitated without the right to vote by a probate court.[1]

If a person was convicted of a felony conviction in any state or federal court, their right to vote is immediately restored once they (1) complete their sentence, including any term of incarceration, parole, or supervision or completed their probation; or (2) have been pardoned.[2]

IMPORTANT NOTE TO VOLUNTEER:** Any questions related to a criminal history and voter eligibility should follow the hotline procedure of Question 12 and Question 13. **DO NOT provide *any* information on these issues to TX callers with criminal history questions or in the OVL entry.**

2. **PRIMARY ELECTION:** Can I vote in the primary election? Do I need to be registered with a political party? Can I change my party registration to vote in another party's primary election? When I voted, the poll worker asked my party affiliation. Are they allowed to do that?

Please see Question 1 for eligibility to vote. Texas is an open primary state. This means that when voting during a primary election, the voter may choose at the polls whether they wish to vote in the Republican or Democratic primary, regardless of their party affiliation at that time. However, once a voter has voted in the primary election, they cannot participate in another party's primary runoff election or convention process for the remainder of the year. A poll worker is allowed to ask a voter's party affiliation during a primary election. Voting in a primary does not commit the voter to vote for any particular candidate in the general election.

Since September 2025, there has been ongoing litigation from the Texas Republican Party to close Republican primaries. To date, this lawsuit has not impacted how Texas primaries are run.[3]

3. **STATUS:** Am I registered to vote? What do I need to do if my name has changed since I registered? I am listed as inactive, what does that mean and what do I need to do?

Voters can determine whether they are registered by checking the Texas Secretary of State's website (https://goelect.txelections.civixapps.com/ivis-mvp-ui/#/login) or by calling the elections administrator's office in the county where they reside (phone numbers are available at https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/votregduties.shtml).

Voters can confirm their status on the website by using (1) the Voter Unique Identifier (VUID), which can be found on their voter registration certificate and birth date; (2) their Texas driver's license number and birthdate, if they provided their license number when they applied for voter registration; or (3) their first and last name, county of residence, birthdate, and zip code.

[1] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 13.001(a)-(c).

[2] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 13.001; TEX. ELEC. CODE 11.002.

[3] *See Hunt v. Texas*, No. 2:25-cv-200-z (N.D. Tex.); Natalia Contreras, *Texas Secretary of State Jane nelson fights Republican lawsuit seeking closed primaries*, Votebeat Texas (Oct. 31, 2025 3:26 PM), https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/10/31/secretary-of-state-jane-nelson-opposes-gop-plan-closed-primaries-voter-registration/.

Name Change

If a voter's legal name has changed since the voter registered to vote, the voter must update their voter registration. Voters may update their registration information online through the Texas Secretary of State's website,[4] or by mail by indicating "Change of Address, Name, or Other Information" and indicating their prior name in the "Former Name" box.[5] The voter will need their current driver license or ID card, social security number, and voter registration card VUID number to update the information online[6]. Voters should be aware that a legal name change should be reflected on the identification they use when they go to vote (see Question 19). Although a name listed in the voter rolls does not need to exactly match the voter identification, the legal name on the identification presented must be "substantially similar" to the name listed in the voter roll.[7]

Inactive

If a voter's registration is listed as inactive, the voter is on the "Suspense List."[8] This list includes voters (1) who haven't responded to a confirmation notice from their county registrar,[9] (2) whose renewal certificate was returned to the registrar as undeliverable,[10] and (3) who were excused or disqualified from jury service because they were not a resident of that county, indicate on the summons notice that they don't reside in that county any longer, or whose jury summons were returned as undeliverable.[11]

A voter whose status is on suspense is eligible to vote in an election provided that the voter completes a Statement of Residence either when voting by mail or at the polls prior to voting (within the same county as the voter's current registration) or (if the voter has moved to a new county) completes a Limited Ballot application during Early Voting at the main early voting polling place.[12]

Voters who live at the same residence as their registered residence should:

- mail in a statement of residence or,
- update their address online, or
- show up at the same precinct location, show proof of identification and complete a statement of residence [13]

They will be then able to vote, and will be taken off of the Suspense List.

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[4] Tex. Off. of the Sec'y of State, *Voter Name and Address Change,* https://txapps.texas.gov/tolapp/sos/SOSACManager?utm_source=child_voter&utm_medium=banner&utm_campaign=texasgov.

[5] *See* Tex. Voter Registration Application, https://webservices.sos.state.tx.us/vrapp/index.asp.

[6] A Voter Unique ID (VUID) number can be obtained from their County Vote Registrar at https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/votregduties.shtml; Tex. Off. of the Sec'y of State, *Voter Name and Address Change,* https://txapps.texas.gov/tolapp/sos/SOSACManager?utm_source=child_voter&utm_medium=banner&utm_campaign=texasgov.

[7] 1 Tex. Admin. Code § 81.71; Tex. Sec'y of State, *Exact name match NOT required for voting with photo ID* (Oct. 24, 2013), https://www.sos.state.tx.us/about/newsreleases/2013/102413.shtml.

[8] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 15.081.

[9] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 15.081(a)(1).

[10] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 15.081(a)(2).

[11] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 15.081(a)(3); TEX. GOV'T CODE § 62.114.

[12] https://www.votetexas.gov/faq/registration.html

[13] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.0011.

Voters who live at a different address but in the same county as their previous residence should:

- mail in a statement of residence or,
- Complete a Voter Registration Application to update their address prior to the Registration Cutoff deadline for any election and send the newly updated application to the Voter Registrar in the county in which the voter resides, or
- show up at the precinct location of their *previous* address, show proof of identification and complete a statement of residence.[14]

If a voter has moved to a different county, they may complete a Limited Ballot application during Early Voting at the main early voting polling place.[15] See Question 8 for more info.

Note that if a voter's name is still on the Suspense List on November 30 following the second general election for state and county officers that occurs after the date the voter's name is entered on the suspense list, then the voter registrar is required by law to cancel the voter's registration.[16]

4. **HOW:** How do I register to vote? Can I register online? Do I need a printer? Can I register to vote in person?

The registration deadline for all elections is the 30th day before the election.[17] **The voter registration deadline for the November 3, 2026 General Election is Monday, October 5, 2026.**

Voters can apply to register to vote by mail, by fax, or in person.[18] Voters may register to vote online only when renewing, replacing, or changing their contact information with a Texas Driver's License or a State ID Card.

- *Mail or Fax:* If applying to register by mail or fax, voters can fill out an application online, print it, and mail or fax it to the voter registrar's office. **A physical copy of the application MUST be mailed to the county and received no later than four business days after the faxed version is received.**[19] Voters who print out an application must physically sign their application.[20]
  - The voter registration application is available at: https://webservices.sos.state.tx.us/vrapp/index.asp.
    - Please note that voters who input their information through this online portal must print out and mail the completed application to their county registrar. Completing the information through this portal *does not* register a person to vote.
  - The addresses for all voter registrar's offices are available at: http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/votregduties.shtml.
  - Voters may request a **postage-paid voter registration application** to be sent to them for

[14] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.0011.
[15] TEX. ELEC. CODE §112.002.
[16] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 16.032; https://webservices.sos.state.tx.us/document-share/files/Suspense%20List%20Mass%20Cancellation%20Process.pdf.
[17] https://www.votetexas.gov/register-to-vote/
[18] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 13.002(a); § 13.143(d)(1-2).
[19] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 13.002(a).
[20] *Vote.Org v. Callanen*, 89 F.4th 459 (5th Cir. 2023) (upholding wet signature requirement on a voter registration application).

free by the Secretary of State here: https://vrrequest.sos.texas.gov/VoterRegistration/AddRequestEN.

- The Secretary of State's office generally mails applications out within one business day of receiving a request.

- *In-Person*: If applying to register in-person, voters can register at the local registrar's office (http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/votregduties.shtml), or with a Volunteer Deputy Registrar[21]. There is no central database of Volunteer Deputy Registrars (VDRs), who are appointed by county registrars to assist in registering voters, and they are often individuals associated with a campaign or local organization. To get in touch with a Volunteer Deputy Registrar, voters can contact their county voter registrar: (https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/votregduties.shtml).
- *Online:* Generally, Texas does not offer online voter registration for new registrants, with the few exceptions below.
  - *First time and registered voters with a Texas license or state ID card:* People who are not registered to vote, but have a Texas Driver's license or State ID Card may register to vote online when renewing, replacing, or changing their contact information related to their Driver's License or ID Card (https://txapps.texas.gov/tolapp/txdl/). The option to register to vote is given at the end of the renewal/replacement process.[22]
  - *Registered voters*: Already registered voters may change their address or submit a name change online (https://txapps.texas.gov/tolapp/sos/SOSACManager).

5. **IDENTIFICATION:** What ID is required to register to vote?

People who have one of the following MUST provide it on the application to register to vote:

- a Texas driver's license number or Texas Personal I.D. number OR
- the last four digits of their social security number.[23]
- A person who does not have any of these three types of identification must check a box stating that they do not have a license number, a personal identification number, or social security number and then will be required to show another form of identification at the polling place. For information on the identification required to vote, see Question 19.

A person does not need to show any identification to a Volunteer Deputy Registrar who may be helping them register to vote.

6. **DEADLINES:** When is/was the voter registration deadline? Are there different deadlines whether I register by mail, in-person, online or on Election Day?

The registration deadline for all elections is the 30th day before the election.[24] For the 2026 General Election on November 3, 2026, the deadline to register to vote by any method is Monday, October 5, 2026.

Only voters with existing registrations may update their voter registration online with name

[21] TEX. ELEC. CODE §112.001; TEX. ELEC. CODE § 13.042.
[22] https://www.votetexas.gov/register-to-vote/update-voter-registration.html.
[23] https://www.sos.state.tx.us/about/newsreleases/2024/040324.shtml.
[24] https://www.votetexas.gov/register-to-vote/

and/or address changes at this time (https://txapps.texas.gov/tolapp/sos/SOSACManager).

Only voters who move *within their prior county of residence* may be able to update their voter registration after the voter registration deadline at the polls.[25] See Question 8 for scenarios of changed addresses.

7. **SAME DAY:** Does my state have Same Day Registration? If so, what is the process?

No, Texas does not have same-day registration. The registration deadline for the 2026 General Election is Monday, October 5, 2026—in Texas, the voter must be registered at least 30 days before any election.[26]

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

The answer depends on when and where the voter moved. Voters may move within the same county but be districted for a different election falling within a different precinct.[27]

- **MOVED WITHIN THE SAME COUNTY:** If a voter moved within the same county and didn't update their registered address, a voter generally may return to their old precinct to vote if they still live in the political subdivision holding the election (if the political subdivision is other than the county). At that location, the voter must complete a "statement of residence" confirming their new address. This will update their registration information for the future.[28] The voter will then be allowed to vote a regular ballot if they are otherwise eligible.
    - Note: For Early Voting, and for Election Day if the voter lives in a county that uses "countywide polling," they can vote at any precinct in that county and don't have to return to a particular one. Check for "countywide polling" here: https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/countywide-polling-place-program.shtml.
    - Individuals may or may not be able to vote a full ballot, depending on what races are held in common between their old address and county address, and whether they moved completely out of a political subdivision within the county (e.g., a city council or school district). Scenarios of whether a person may or may not have a full ballot can be found here: https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2025-16.shtml.[29]
- **MOVED TO A NEW COUNTY BEFORE THE REGISTRATION DEADLINE, UPDATE REGISTRATION:** If a voter moved to a "new county," and wants to vote a full ballot on General Election Day, November 3, 2026, they will need to update their change of address by the registration deadline of 30 days before the election (Monday, October 5, 2026 for the '26 general election.) Otherwise they cannot vote a full ballot.

[25] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.0011(b); Tex. Sec'y of State, Election Advisory No. 2025-16 (Oct. 14, 2025), https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2025-16.shtml ("If the voter changes their residence address within the county without updating their voter registration by the voter registration deadline, or the voter has submitted an update to their voter registration based on a change of residence address that will not be effective for the election, the voter must still reside in the political subdivision ordering the election or in the territory covered by the election to vote a full ballot in their former voter registration precinct pursuant to Section 63.0011(b)(1) and (b)(2) of the Code.").

[26] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 13.143.

[27] Tex. Sec'y of State, Election Advisory No. 2025-16 (Oct. 14, 2025), https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2025-16.shtml.

[28] https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/pol-sub/21-6f.pdf (p. 2).

[29] Tex. Sec'y of State, Election Advisory No. 2025-16 (Oct. 14, 2025), https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2025-16.shtml.

- **MOVED TO A NEW COUNTY, LIMITED BALLOT OPTION ONLY DURING EARLY VOTING:** If a voter moved to a "new county," without updating their address by the registration deadline, they can vote a "limited ballot"[30] during the early voting period *ONLY,* either in person or by mail. They are ineligible to vote on General Election Day.
    - Limited ballots are only available during the early voting period and only at the "Main Early Voting location" (generally the county clerk's office), unless the voter is otherwise eligible to Vote By Mail (see Question 32 for Vote By Mail eligibility).[31]
    - Limited ballots are NOT available on Election Day.
    - A person may vote a limited ballot in-person only at the main early voting polling place in their new county of residence.
    - A person will have to fill out an application to vote a limited ballot - the early voting clerk should be able to give the person an application.
        - Note, completing an application for a limited ballot will serve as a voter registration application for future elections in the county where the application is submitted.[32]
    - The voter must be a current registered voter in their former county in order to qualify OR they must have been registered in their old county at the time they submitted a voter registration application in their new county, if they have done so.
    - Limited ballots will ONLY contain races that are statewide and races that are the same in both the voter's old county of residence and in their new county of residence.
    - The Secretary of State's Office advises that voters cast a provisional ballot if they move to a new county after the voter registration deadline and vote on Election Day. Voters should not vote from their old county of residence.

For full information on this procedure (including the by-mail option, if qualified to vote by mail per Question 32), go to Early Voting in Texas or contact the Clerk's Office in the new county.

9. **TEMPORARY MOVE:** I have moved temporarily. How can I vote?

Texas does not have any specific rules for a temporary move. The voter is allowed to claim the old address as their home if they have an intention to return to that address and can conceivably do so at some point in the future. If a voter's principal residence has not changed but they are unable to vote in person in that precinct, the voter may be eligible to vote by mail if they will be out of their county of registration DURING BOTH EARLY VOTING AND ON ELECTION DAY (see Question 32).

10. **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?

The intention of a person, including college students, is central to determining residence.[33] Under Texas law, residence means domicile, that is, one's home and fixed place of habitation to which one intends to return after any temporary absence.[34]

[30] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 112.002.
[31] TEX. ELEC. CODE §112.002.
[32] https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/pol-sub/5-36.pdf.
[33] Every person has "the right and privilege of fixing his residence according to his own desires." McBeth v. Streib, 96 S.W.2d 992,995 (Tex. Civ. App. San Antonio 1936).
[34] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 1.015(a).

Registration and voting options for college students:

- **Register at Texas college address:** College students may register to vote where their college is located, if they intend their dorm or living situation to be their "residence" for the time being and consider it their home.[35] They can use an on-campus P.O. Box as their registration address.[36]
    - NOTE: Out-of-State Students must have the requisite photo ID to vote (if no TX DL/State ID to be able to vote; see Question 19)
- **Register with home address before college:** College students may vote or register to vote in the county where they resided before they moved away for college, if they intend their previous address to be their "residence" and view their college residence as temporary. Students who attend college outside of Texas are still considered Texas residents if they view the move as temporary for school and intend to make Texas their home afterwards.[37]

For more information regarding student residency refer to this Election Advisory from August 31, 2021:

https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/laws/advisory2021-10.shtml[38]

11. **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).[39] Collectively these voters are referred to as UOCAVA voters. Step-by-step assistance and forms are available at: https://www.votetexas.gov/voting-by-mail/military-and-overseas-voters.html and fvap.gov/texas.

Filling out and sending a Federal Postcard Application (FPCA):

- Overseas U.S. citizens or active uniformed service members (and eligible dependents) must request their Federal Postcard Application (FPCA) by the 11th day before Election Day; **October 23, 2026** for the November 3rd General Election). FPCAs should be requested as early as possible.
    - What does the FPCA do?
        - It registers the voter onto the permanent voter rolls 30 days after receipt by the county (unless voter marks indefinitely away / do not intend to return)
        - It functions as an application for ballot by mail and gives the voter temporary

[35] Office of Texas. Attorney General, Opinion No. GA-0141, 2004 WL 228527 (Feb. 4, 2004), https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/opinions/greg-abbott/ga-0141

[36] *Speights v. Willis*, 88 S.W.3d 817 (Tex. App. Beaumont 2002) (voters who were physically present and intended county to be residence for purposes of voter registration, yet who claimed post office box numbers as addresses, satisfied statutory voter registration application requirements and, thereby, residence requirement).

[37] 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).

TEX. ELEC. CODE § 101.001 et seq.; TEX. ELEC. CODE § 105.001.

[38] Election Advisory No. 2021-10 (August 31, 2021)("Requirement for Residential Proof does not Apply to Certain Voters. The requirement for residential proof does not apply to a member of the U.S. armed forces or the spouse or dependent of a member, a voter enrolled as a full-time student who lives on campus at an institution of higher education, or a voter whose address is confidential under Texas law. (Section 15.054(d), Texas Election Code). If a voter registrar knows that a voter falls under one of these categories, the voter registrar is not required to send out the Notice to Confirm Voter Registration Address by Providing Documentation.").

[39] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 101.001 et seq.; TEX. ELEC. CODE § 105.001.

registration status for certain offices
        - If the voter marks "do not intend to return" in the new FPCA form or "indefinitely away" in the old FPCA form, then it signs the voter by for a federal ballot only.
    - How can the voter send their completed, signed FPCA?
        - Hard copy by mail
        - Common or contract carrier
        - In-person delivery
        - Fax (if the Early Voting Clerk's office has a fax machine)
            - Note: If faxed, the voter must then mail the original hard copy and the county must receive it within four days of the faxed submission.
        - E-mail (scanned image of signed form)
    - Where should the voter send their signed FPCA?
        - The Early Voting Clerk's Office of their home Texas County - list here

Receiving a mail-in ballot from the clerk:

- Hard copy by mail (default method if nothing else requested)
- E-mail (unmarked ballot)
- Common or contract carrier (if paid for by voter)

Returning a mail-in ballot for overseas and military voters:

- Hard copy by mail, or common or contract courier (like any other ballot by mail).
- Faxed if from military voter (or spouse or dependent) in hostile fire pay / imminent danger pay / combat zone.[40] A list of qualifying areas for voters to be designated as in hostile fire or imminent danger pay areas in 2026 elections can be found here: https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2026-04.shtml.

Deadline for returning a mail-in ballot for overseas and military voters:

- Deadline for voters voting from overseas location: receipt by **5th day after Election Day**.[41]
- Deadline for the ballot to be **received** is the **6th day after Election Day** for:
    - Members of the armed forces of the United States, or the spouse or a dependent of a member of the armed forces;
    - Members of the merchant marines of the United States, or the spouse or a dependent of a member of the merchant marine;
    - Members of the Texas National Guard, or the spouse or dependent of a member of the Texas National Guard;
    - Members of the National Guard of another state, or the spouse or dependent of a member of the National Guard of another state; and
    - Members of the military reserves on active duty, or the spouse or dependent of a member of the military reserves on active duty. [42]

Military or Overseas Voter who did not receive their ballot may use the Federal Write-in Absentee

[40] https://www.votetexas.gov/voting-by-mail/military-and-overseas-voters.html.
EX. ELEC. CODE 105.004(a)
[41] https://www.votetexas.gov/voting-by-mail/military-and-overseas-voters.html#c.
[42] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 101.057.

Ballot (FWAB)

- If a military or overseas voter does not receive their mail-in ballot in time to meet the return deadlines, they can use the FWAB ballot as a backup. A voter can start their backup ballot here.

  FPCA Ballot Tracker is available here.

12. **CRIMINAL CONVICTION:** I have a felony criminal conviction. Can I register to vote? Does the type of conviction matter? Are there any restrictions after any misdemeanor convictions? What process (if any) is needed to restore my right to vote if it was impacted?

    IMPORTANT NOTE TO VOLUNTEER: Because issues related to criminal convictions are complex and sensitive and because of the potential for serious consequences if a mistake is made, please immediately escalate these tickets to your Captain for timely review by the Texas command center. **DO NOT provide *any* information on these issues to TX callers or in the OVL entry. Escalate these tickets in OVL for further follow-up.**

    - Provide the following answer to the caller: "We cannot provide any information on eligibility, but we will pass along your information to our local partner to follow-up with you."
    - OVL ticket notes should be written up as following: "Caller asked about voting eligibility and criminal convictions. Passed along to local partner for follow-up."
    - A voter's right to vote is automatically restored after full completion of the voter's sentence (including any periods of incarceration, parole, community supervision and probation) (or a pardon).[43] The voter will need to re-register to vote (if their registration was cancelled due to the conviction) by submitting a new voter registration application to their county voter registrar.[44]

13. **INCARCERATED:** I am currently incarcerated. Can I register to vote? Can I vote from jail?

    IMPORTANT NOTE TO VOLUNTEER: Because issues related to criminal convictions are complex and sensitive and because of the potential for serious consequences if a mistake is made, please immediately escalate these tickets to your Captain for timely review by the Texas command center. **DO NOT provide *any* information on these issues to TX callers or in the OVL entry. Escalate these tickets in OVL for further follow-up.**

    Provide the following answer to the caller: "We cannot provide any information on jail voting, but we will pass along your information to our local partner for follow-up.

    - If the caller cannot receive a call back, ask: "*Is there a phone number of a loved one who should receive the call back with more information? Is there a jail staff member at your facility who can be contacted to receive information on your behalf?*"

    OVL ticket note should only read: "Caller asked about voting eligibility and criminal convictions. Passed along to local partner for follow-up."

14. **REGISTRATION CHALLENGED:** My registration has been challenged, what should I do?

    Under Texas law, a voter's registration may not be challenged or canceled during Early Voting or on Election Day.

[43] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 11.002(a)(4).
[44] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 13.001(a)(3).

A challenge to a voter's registration may be initiated either by the Clerk's/Voter Registrar's office or by another registered voter in the same county with personal knowledge. Challenges may be brought on the basis of death, felony conviction, adjudicated mental incapacity, lack of US citizenship, or non-residency.

The Clerk's/Voter Registrar's Office is challenging my registration. What do I need to know?

- **Challenge on the basis of Death, Felony Conviction, Mental Incapacitation:** Written notice must be given to the voter, and the voter must respond within 30 days.[45]
    - CANCELLATION: The registrar may cancel the voter's registration if after considering the voter's reply, the registrar believes the voter is ineligible; the voter does not respond on or before the 30th day after the confirmation notice was mailed; or the notice is returned undeliverable with no forwarding address.[46]
    - CHALLENGING A CANCELLATION BY REQUESTING A HEARING: The voter can challenge a cancellation by requesting a hearing. Hearing requests must be in writing and signed by the voter.[47]
        - Within 2 days of the hearing request, the registrar must give a time, date, and location for the hearing.
        - A hearing must be scheduled within 10 days of the voter's hearing request.
        - The voter may appear personally at the hearing to offer evidence and argument.
        - While a hearing request is pending or while a determination is pending (after the hearing occurs), the voter is still registered to vote. Their registration must be reinstated during this period.[48]

- **Challenge on the basis of Residence:** Written notice must be sent to the voter who has 30 days to respond.
    - Once a voter's registration has been challenged based on residence (e.g., the voter doesn't live where they are registered, the voter's address is a commercial P.O. box number or a commercial building):
    - MAIL A CONFIRMATION NOTICE: The registrar must promptly mail a confirmation notice to the voter to verify residency. The registrar cannot send a confirmation notice requesting verification of residence based on a voter challenge that was filed after the 75th day before the date of any general election for state and local officers (August 20, 2026 for the General Election November 3, 2026) – the registrar must wait until after the election to mail a confirmation notice.[49] The confirmation notice must inform the voter that their residential address is being challenged, that they must fill out a sworn statement of residence at a polling location before being able to vote, and a warning that their registration will be canceled if they **EITHER** fail to confirm their residence in writing with the registrar **OR** fail to vote in two general election cycles following the date of the confirmation notice.[50]
        - Note: Under the National Voter Registration Act, which governs federal elections including generals, primaries, and runoffs, a registrar cannot send an address

[45] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 16.033.
[46] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 16.033(d).
[47] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 16.062.
[48] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 16.063.
[49] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 16.0921(c).
[50] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 15.052(a).

confirmation notice 90 days before an election for federal offices because it is considered a "program the purpose of which is to systematically remove voters from official lists of eligible voters."[51]

- Note: this is only for challenges based on residence. For challenges based on other qualifications, the registrar must send immediate notice regardless of an impending general election AND because under the NVRA, these list maintenance activities are not a program for the purpose of systematically removing voters.[52]
    - *CONTENT OF THE NOTICE:* The notice must let the voter know that their address is in question, that they must fill out a statement of residence at a polling location before being able to vote, and a warning that their registration will be canceled if they EITHER fail to confirm their residence in writing with the registrar OR fail to vote in two general election cycles following the date of the confirmation notice.[53]
    - SUSPENSE LIST: A voter who doesn't respond to the confirmation notice is put on a "Suspense List." A voter can be placed on the "Suspense List" for two general election cycles for state or county officers before being removed from the voter rolls.[54]
    - If a voter whose name is on the "Suspense List" shows up to vote at the precinct in which they are registered, they must be allowed to vote. after signing a statement of residence.
    - A voter will be removed from the "Suspense List" when they have either corrected the information required by the registrar or updated their registration application[55] (can be done online at https://txapps.texas.gov/tolapp/sos/SOSACManager.)
    - CANCELLATION: The registrar may cancel the voter's registration if the voter has not voted for two general election cycles for state or county officers or the registrar has not received written confirmation of residence from the voter during that time.[56]

- **Challenge on the basis of Citizenship:**[57] Written notice must be sent to the voter who has 30 days to respond or their registration will be cancelled by the county registrar.[58] After 30 days, voter can still show up to vote and get reinstated if they provide proof of citizenship.[59]
    - MAIL A CONFIRMATION NOTICE: The registrar must mail a written notice to the voter requesting that the voter provide relevant information to determine eligibility and

[51] 52 U.S.C. § 20507(c).

[52] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 16.091.

[53] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 15.052(a).

[54] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 15.053, § 15.081; https://webservices.sos.state.tx.us/document-share/files/Suspense%20List%20Mass%20Cancellation%20Process.pdf.

[55] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 15.023

[56] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 16.032.

[57] A settlement agreement between the State of Texas and civil rights groups in 2019 in *LULAC v. Whitley*, Settlement Agmnt. Apr. 26, 2019, No. SA-19-CA-074-FB, (S.D. Tex.) (consolidated with *MOVE Tex. Civic Fund. v. Whitley*, No. SA-19-CA-159-FB) (W.D. Tex.)) a case that challenged the State's process for conducting non-citizen voter purges resulted in many of the procedures related to investigating a person's citizenship status, matching citizenship records from different agencies, and procedures for notifying the voter before cancellation.

[58] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 16.032

[59] https://www.sos.state.tx.us/about/newsreleases/2025/102025.shtml

notifying the voter that if they do not reply by the 30th day after the notice was sent, their registration will be canceled.

- CANCELLATION: The registrar may cancel the voter's registration if after considering the voter's reply, the registrar believes the voter is ineligible, the voter does not respond on or before the 30th day after the confirmation notice was mailed, or the notice is returned undeliverable with no forwarding address.[60]
- CHALLENGING A CANCELLATION BY REQUESTING A HEARING: The voter can always challenge a cancellation by requesting a hearing. Hearing requests must be in writing.[61]
  - Within 2 days of the hearing request, the registrar must give a time, date, and location for the hearing.
  - A hearing must be scheduled within 10 days of the voter's hearing request.
  - The voter may appear personally at the hearing to offer evidence and argument.
  - While a hearing request is pending or while a determination is pending (after the hearing occurs), the voter is still registered to vote. Their registration must be reinstated during this period.[62]
- VOTER CAN STILL SHOW UP TO VOTE: Even if the 30 days have passed, a voter may still show up to vote at their polling location and can be reinstated as long as the voter presents proof of citizenship.
  - U.S. birth certificate or a Consular Report of Birth Abroad of a Citizen of the United States issued by the United States Department of State;
  - United States passport;
  - Certificate of Naturalization or Certificate of Citizenship; or
  - Your parent's Certificate of Naturalization along with your birth certificate if you became a U.S. citizen as a result of your parent's naturalization.

A private citizen is challenging my registration. What do I need to know?

Any registered voter may challenge the registration of another voter in the same county after filing a sworn statement with the local registrar's office[63] that (1) identifies the voter being challenged and (2) gives a reason for challenging the voter's registration, that is based on the "personal knowledge"[64] of the challenger. Mass challenges to voter registrations are permitted under Texas law.

With requisite "personal knowledge," a private citizen can challenge a voter's registration based on: residency, citizenship, death, felony conviction, age, or adjudicated mental incapacity with loss of right to vote.

The follow-up process for challenges based on residence versus challenges based on other qualifications is different, as explained above. [65]

[60] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 16.033(d).
[61] Tex. Elec. Code § 16.062.
[62] Tex. Elec. Code § 16.063.
[63] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 16.091, § 16.092.
[64] //www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/elo/rp-1.pdf. A formal Attorney General Opinion from 2018, acknowledging the absence of a definition of "personal knowledge;" TEX.ELEC. CODE § 16.092(2).
TEX. ELEC. CODE § 41.032(a).
TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.0101(a).
TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.0101(a).
TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.0101(c).
[65] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 16.091

- For challenges to registration based on residence, the processes are outlined above. In a nutshell, **the election official must send a written notice to the voter. The voter has 30 days to respond. The voter will remain on the Suspense List for two general election cycles, unless the voter shows up to vote. Clerks/Voter Registrar's offices may not send confirmation notices after the 75th day prior to an election for state and local offices or after the 90th day prior to an election for federal offices (as this type of activity is considered a systematic removal).**
- For challenges to registration based on other grounds, the processes are outlined above.

HOW TO VOTE: ELECTION DAY

15. **HOURS:** When do the polls open/close on Election Day?

    The polls must be open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. local time[66] on Election Day.[67]

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

    A voter's polling location can be found with the voter's registration record (https://goelect.txelections.civixapps.com/ivis-mvp-ui/#/login) (there will usually be links on the right next to the voter's registration record) or on the voter's county election website.

    Note: All voters 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 that county on Election Day. A list of the counties who are using countywide voting is available at this link: countywide-polling-place-program.

    If a voter has moved recently and has not updated their voter registration, see Question 8 and Question 9.

    NOTE: Voters who have a physical disability or have language needs are allowed to receive assistance at the polling location. Voter assistants can help voters with their ballots, but they will need to fill out an oath. For more details, see Question 30. Voters can also have language interpreters at the polls. For more details, see Question 79.

17. **TIME OFF WORK:** Is my employer required to give me time off to vote? Is it paid or unpaid?

    Yes. Assuming that an employee has not voted already during early voting, they are entitled to take paid time off to vote on Election Day as long as they don't have two consecutive hours to vote outside of their working hours (i.e., if working hours are from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., then the employee would have two consecutive hours before work (7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. or after work 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. to vote, in which case they cannot take paid time off).[68]

18. **CLOSING:** What if the polls close when I am already in line?

[66] Texas is split into two time zones, although only El Paso County and Hudspeth County are in MST. All other counties are in CST.

[67] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 41.031(a).

[68] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 276.001, § 276.004.

A voter inside or waiting to enter the polling location by 7:00 p.m. local time is entitled to vote,[69] but they must stay in line.

19. **IDENTIFICATION:** What identification is required to vote?

A voter must present either an acceptable form of ***photo*** identification OR another acceptable form of identification accompanied by sworn declaration of reasonable impediment:[70]

Acceptable Photo Identification:

- Texas Driver's License issued by Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS);
- Texas Personal Identification Card issued by DPS;
- Texas Election Identification Certificate issued by DPS;
- Texas Handgun License issued by DPS;
- US Military Identification Card with photo;
- US Citizenship Certificate with photo; or
- US Passport (book or card).

Except for the U.S. citizenship certificate (which does not expire)**,** the identification must either be current or if expired, then it must have expired within the past four years.

Exceptions:

- Disabled voters who present their voter registration certificate.[71]
- Voters aged 70 or older may use an expired ID listed above regardless of how long it's been expired, if the identification is otherwise valid.[72]

In order to be exempted from the photo identification requirement due to a disability, a voter must: (1) obtain a letter from the U.S. Social Security Administration verifying that the voter has a SSA disability determination or a letter from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs verifying that you have a disability rating of more than 50% from the VA; and (2) submit a Request for Disability Exemption form to the voter's county registrar more than 30 days before an upcoming election.[73] The Request for a Disability Exemption form can be found here: https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/forms/pol-sub/21-7f.pdf.

Reasonable Impediment Declaration: If a person does not have access to an acceptable photo ID,[74] then a voter may still vote in-person at a polling place with a sworn Declaration of Reasonable Impediment with a supporting identifying document. **Those supporting identifying documents include:**

[69] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 41.032(a).
[70] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.0101(a).
[71] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.001(h)
[72] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.0101(c).
[73] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.001(h); *see also Photo ID Exemption - Proving Disability*, Disability Rights Texas (Jun. 24, 2024), https://disabilityrightstx.org/en/handout/photo-id-exemption-proving-disability/ (overviewing the exemption in more depth.
[74] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.011(b)(3); Tex. Sec'y of State, Election Advisory 2017-15 (Oct. 11, 2017), https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2017-15.shtml (describing reasonably impediment declaration process for voters who cannot reasonably obtain a photo ID to vote)

- a certified copy or original of a domestic (from a U.S. state or territory) birth certificate or a document confirming birth admissible in a court of law which establishes the voter's identity (which may include a foreign birth document)[75];
- a current utility bill;
- a bank statement;
- a government check;
- a paycheck; OR
- a government document that shows the voter's name and an address (this includes the voter's voter registration certificate).[76]

Poll workers are not permitted to question why voters do not possess a photo ID, why they cannot reasonably obtain a photo ID, and why they are requesting a reasonable impediment declaration. Voters who do not have any of these supporting documents will be offered a provisional ballot and will need to cure the provisional ballot in order for the ballot to count. See Question 20 for more about the reasonable impediment declaration.

Additional notes on being accepted at the polls to vote:

- **Statement of residence:** before a voter is accepted for voting, the poll worker checking in the voter will ask if the voter's residence address on the poll worker's list is current and whether the voter has changed residence in the county.[77] If the voter's residence has changed within the county, the voter may still vote.[78] See Question 14.
- **Address:** the voter's address on either the photo ID or the alternative documentation need not match their address on the voter registration list.[79]
- **Name:** If the name on the voter list does not exactly match the name on their identifying documentation, the voter can vote a regular ballot so long as the election officer determines that the names are "substantially similar," and the voter submits an affidavit statement swearing that they are the person on the list of registered voters.[80]

20. **NO IDENTIFICATION:** Can I vote without providing identification?

Yes. See Question 19 above.

While election officials may ask a voter if they have an acceptable photo ID, election officials may not question or challenge the voter concerning their lack of a photo ID. The voter must specify one of the following "reasonable impediment[s]" to obtaining photo ID in their signed document: lack of transportation; lack of birth certificate or other documents needed to obtain photo ID; work schedule; lost or stolen identification; disability or illness; family responsibilities; a photo ID has been applied for but not received.[81] Election officials may not question the reasonableness of the voter's difficulty in obtaining a photo ID.[82]

[75] Note: while the TX website just says a "copy" is needed, the statute and form reference the need for a "certified copy."
[76] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.0101(b).
[77] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 16.0331.
[78] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.011(b).
[79] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.001(c-1); https://www.dps.texas.gov/section/driver-license/election-identification-certificate-eic
[80] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.001(c).
[81] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.001(i)(3).
[82] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.001(d).

The address on the identification presented is not required to match the address recorded in the official list of registered voters.

If on Election Day, a voter registration certificate indicates that the voter is appearing at the incorrect polling place, the voter should be directed to go to their correct polling place.

If a voter has continued access to their acceptable form of photo ID, but, for example, forgets to bring their acceptable form of photo ID to the polling place and/or left it, for example, at home or in their car, the voter still possesses the acceptable photo ID and must use it to vote. In this situation, a voter may leave and return with their acceptable ID, or may cast a provisional ballot and "cure" by appearing at the county voter registrar's office within 6 calendar days of election day and presenting an acceptable form of photo ID.[83]

21. **NOT ON ROLLS AT MY POLLING PLACE:** I am at my polling place but am not showing up on the voter registration roll. Can I vote where I am?

Maybe. Explore the following possibilities:

- Check the voter's registration status using the registration lookup tool (https://goelect.txelections.civixapps.com/ivis-mvp-ui/#/login) to make sure they are registered to vote and at the right place. (see Question 3)
- Has the voter moved recently? Could they be registered at an old address? Check that address in the registration lookup tool. (see Question 3)
- 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) in the registration lookup tool. (see Question 3)
- When did the voter register to vote? Was that before the deadline to register?
- When was the last time the caller can remember they voted? (see Question 3 re: "Suspense List")

The Secretary of State or local voter registrar may have removed a voter's name from the rolls for any of the following reasons: [84]

- Notice that they reside in a county other than the one they are registered in;
- Notice that they are deceased;
- Evidence of a final court judgment regarding their mental incapacity to vote;
- Evidence of a final court judgment regarding their felony conviction;
- Notice that they have applied for a limited ballot in another county;
- Notice that they have registered to vote in another state;
- Notice that they have registered to vote in another county;
- Notice that they are not a U.S. citizen;[85] or
- A written, signed request from them to cancel their registration.[86]

Scenarios for whether the voter can still vote at their polling location:

[83] https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2017-15.shtml
[84] Tex. Elec. Code § 16.031.
[85] Tex. Elec. Code § 16.0332(a).
[86] Tex. Elec. Code § 16.0331.

VOTING A REGULAR BALLOT: If the voter has the required identification (see Question 19) **and** voter registration certificate, they can cast a ***regular ballot*** if they present their voter registration certificate (which must show that registration in that precinct or a different precinct within the same county). Although ***NOTE** that if the county participates in Countywide Polling on Election Day (list found here), a voter can vote at any polling location in the county.

VOTING A REGULAR BALLOT PLUS FILLING OUT A STATEMENT OF RESIDENCE: A voter who is voting in a different precinct within the same county must also fill out an affidavit that will be given to them at the polls attesting to the following:

- That they are currently a resident in the precinct in which they are voting;
- That they were a resident of the precinct in which they are voting at the time their address was last provided to the voter registrar;
- That they did not deliberately provide false information; and
- That they are only voting once in the election.[87]

VOTING A PROVISIONAL BALLOT: If the voter does not have a voter registration certificate and their name is not on the list of registered voters, they may vote by provisional ballot as a last resort.[88] Before receiving the provisional ballot, the voter must complete an affidavit stating that they are eligible and registered to vote in that precinct.

VOTING A LIMITED BALLOT: If a voter moved to a new county, and did not change their voter registration to their new county before the voter registration deadline, they can vote a limited ballot (described above) in the new county ***only*** during the Early Voting period, or, if eligible, by mail ballot.[89] A voter must submit an "Application for a Limited Ballot" which the election judge will then forward to the new county's registrar to update the voter's registration. The limited ballot will only include candidates and measures that are common between the former county and the new county.

22. **GIVEN PROVISIONAL BALLOT:** I am being told I have to vote provisionally, what does that mean?

Casting a provisional ballot should *always* be a last resort. Nevertheless, as required by the federal Help America Vote Act, a provisional ballot must be offered to:

- Any voter who says they are registered and is eligible to vote in the precinct in which they are appearing;
- Any voter whose eligibility is called into question;[90]
- Any voter who does not have one of the accepted forms of ID (either an acceptable photo ID or Reasonable Impediment Declaration with supporting ID).[91]

Before receiving the provisional ballot, the voter must complete an affidavit stating that they are eligible and registered to vote in that precinct.[92] If a voter casts a provisional ballot because they do not have the required identification, an election officer must give the voter written information explaining the

[87] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.006.
[88] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.009.
[89] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 112.002.
[90] HAVA, 52 U.S.C.§ 21082, Tex. Elec. Code § 63.001.
[91] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.001(g); § 63.011.
[92] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.011(a).

procedure the voter must follow to have their vote counted.[93] After the election, the Early Voting Ballot Board will determine whether the provisional ballot will be counted.

WHY DID I GET A PROVISIONAL BALLOT? The voter should ask why they were offered a provisional ballot. Typically, a voter should be offered a provisional ballot only when:[94]

- The voter does not have the proper identification;
- The voter's name is not on the list of registered voters for the polling location and their voter registration cannot be verified while at the polling location;
- A voter whose name on their ID is not substantially similar to the name of the official list of registered voters;
- A voter whose identity cannot be verified by the ID presented;
- A voter who has received a disability exemption, but does not have a voter registration certificate indicating such an exemption;
- The voter applied for an Early Voting/mail-in ballot and did not vote early by mail;
- A voter who votes during the polling hours that are extended by a state or federal court;
- A voter who is registered to vote by attempting to vote in a precinct other than the one in which the voter is registered;
- A voter who is on the precinct list of registered voters, but whose registered residence address is outside the political subdivision for which the voter is seeking to vote;
- Other ____with an explanation.[95]

PROVISIONAL BALLOT BECAUSE OF ID ISSUE: If a voter casts a provisional ballot because of an ID issue, they must visit their county elections office IN PERSON within **six calendar days** of Election Day (Monday, November 9, 2026 for the General Election), or their provisional ballot will not be counted. [96]

- They will need to bring an acceptable photo ID, or if they don't have a photo ID, then they will need to bring a supporting ID and fill out a Reasonable Impediment Declaration, or, if applicable, submit one of the temporary affidavits (e.g., religious objection or natural disaster) or, if applicable, qualify for a permanent disability exemption.
- If the county can validate the voter's information, then their provisional ballot will be counted.

AVAILABILITY OF PROVISIONAL BALLOTS: The Texas SOS's Office makes clear that provisional ballots should be offered at ALL early voting locations and a voter should not have to drive to the main early voting location to vote a provisional ballot.[97]

Other than for these reasons, the voter should cast a regular ballot.
This includes voters who applied for a mail-in ballot and canceled their application by (1) returning all of their application materials by mail (mailed to their county Elections Office and received no later than 3 days before Election Day), (2) appearing in-person before Early Voting begins at their county's Early Voting Clerk's office, or (3) appearing in-person during Early Voting or on Election Day (speaking with the Early Voting Clerk or the Presiding Judge of their polling location). Once a voter's mail-in ballot is canceled, they may vote a regular ballot.

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[93] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.001(g)(2).
[94] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 63.011.
[95] 1 Tex. Admin. Code § 81.172.
[96] 1 Tex. Admin. Code §§ 81.173(b)(4), 81.176.
[97] https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/no-pressure-refresher-provisional-ballots-2-16-24.pdf
1 Tex. Admin. Code §§ 81.173(b)(4), 81.176 Tex. Elec. Code § 65.059.
TEX. ELEC. CODE § 67.003.

23. **REQUESTING PROVISIONAL BALLOT:** I am being told I can't vote, can I vote provisionally?

Yes. For any of the reasons listed in Question 22, including lack of an acceptable ID, a voter may vote provisionally during Early Voting and Election Day.

If the voter is voting provisionally because of an ID issue, they will then have **six (6) calendar days** from Election Day (Monday, November 9, 2026 for the General Election) to present a photo ID listed above to the county voter registrar. A voter may also receive a provisional ballot based on loss of ID due to a natural disaster (as declared by the president or the governor) or after executing an affidavit that states the voter has a religious objection to being photographed.[98]

24. **PROVISIONAL BALLOT NEXT STEPS:** I voted a provisional ballot, what now?

If you voted a provisional ballot because you did not have the proper ID, then you will need to visit the county elections office by the **6th calendar day** after Election Day (Monday, November 9, 2026 for the General Election) to verify your identification.

Call the registrar's office to inquire about the status of your provisional ballot. List of registrar's available here: https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/votregduties.shtml.

A written notice by the presiding judge of the Early Voting Ballot Board will be mailed to you no later than 10 days after the canvass (using the mailing address you provided on your Provisional Ballot Affidavit Envelope when you voted) regarding the outcome of your provisional ballot noting:[99]

- if the provisional ballot was counted; or
- if the provisional ballot was not counted, and the reason it was not counted.

*Note: The canvass time will be set by the local canvassing authority not later than the 11th day after Election Day and not earlier than:

- The third day after Election Day,
- The date by which all provisional ballots are counted, and
- The date by which all timely received ballots from outside the U.S. by UOCAVA or overseas military voters are counted.[100]

HOW TO VOTE: IN-PERSON EARLY VOTING

(in this state defined as: early voting in person)

[98] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 65.054; Tex. Elec. Code § 65.0541.
[99] 1 Tex. Admin. Code §§ 81.173(b)(4), 81.176 TEX. ELEC. CODE § 65.059.
[100] TEX.ELEC. CODE § 67.003.

25. **AVAILABILITY:** Is there early voting in my state (whether called early voting or in person absentee voting)?

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

This Section concerns in-person early voting. See the next section for early voting by mail. (See Questions 31–48).

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

No: Any registered voter can vote early in-person.[101]

27. **WHEN:** When does early voting begin/end?

In-Person: Voting in-person during the early voting period begins the seventeenth day before Election Day and ends the fourth day before Election Day.[102] Any registered voter can currently vote ***in-person*** from **Monday, October 19, 2026 through Friday, October 30, 2026** for the November 3, 2026 General Election.[103]

By Mail: Only some voters may vote by mail in Texas. Voters eligible to vote by mail (see Question 32) can apply to vote by mail by submitting an application by **Friday, October 23, 2026**; the application must be **received** by the early voting clerk's office of county elections office (either by mail or in person) by that date. [104]

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 may be found by looking up the voter's registration record at https://goelect.txelections.civixapps.com/ivis-mvp-ui/#/login (there will usually be links on the right next to the voter's registration record). In the alternative, Early Voting polling locations and times can be found by going to the voter's county election website and must be posted at least 21 days prior to Election Day.[105]

NOTE: Early voting availability will change in Texas, but it is currently unknown when those changes will occur. In 2025, the Texas Legislature passed SB 2753, which shifts the early voting period to begin twelve days before Election Day in Primary and November General Election Days, nine days before May local elections, and ten days before a primary runoff. This change means there will no longer be days where a person cannot early vote between the early voting period and Election Day. While this law is effective, it will not impact elections until the Secretary of State completes its in-depth report of the implementation of SB 2753. There is no anticipated time for when this report may be completed and which elections will be impacted.[106]

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[101] https://www.votetexas.gov/voting/early-voting.html.

[102] Tex. Elec. Code § 85.001(a)&(c).

[103] Tex. Elec. Code §§ 81.001(a)-(b); 85.001(a)&(c).

[104] Tex. Elec. Code § 84.007(c).

[105] Tex. Elec. Code § 4.003(b) and § 172.1112 (specifically for primaries).

[106] Tex. Elec. Code § 85.001(a), (e); SB 2753 (2025); https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/seminar/2025/43rd-annual-election-law-seminar-for-county-elections-officials-2025/sb2753-a-path-toward-implementation.pdf.

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

The locations and times of Early Voting polling places for the voter's county may be found by looking up the voter's registration record at https://goelect.txelections.civixapps.com/ivis-mvp-ui/#/login (there will usually be links on the right next to the voter's registration record). In the alternative, Early Voting polling locations and times can be found by or going to the voter's county election website.

29. **IDENTIFICATION:** What identification is required for early voting? What if I don't have an ID?

Voters MUST provide acceptable photo identification to vote early or have a permanent exemption on their voter registration certificate, or offer a supporting form of ID and a Reasonable Impediment Declaration. The same identification rules for Election Day apply to early voting. See Questions 19 and 20. A photo of an acceptable form of identification DOES NOT count as a photo ID.

NOTE: 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 term commonly used 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."

30. **ASSISTANCE:** What if I need assistance voting early in person?

Voters can receive assistance during the voting process in various ways:

- Helping the voter read and mark the ballot, as well as navigate the in person voting process.
- Helping interpret and communicate with election officials for voters who cannot speak English, or who communicate only with sign language, see Questions 78, 79, and 80.
- The voter can vote curbside if they are physically unable to enter the polling place.[107] For more details on Curbside Voting, see Question 80.
- The voter may be transported to the polls by someone else. There are restrictions around the number of voters who may be transported to the polls by one person and the requirement that the driver fill out an oath. For more details on Transportation to the polls, see Question 83.

What do I need to know about in-person assistance at the polling place?

A voter is entitled to receive voting assistance during early in-person voting, if they have a physical disability that renders them unable to write or see, OR cannot read the language in which the ballot is written.[108] A person is considered an assistant if they are reading the ballot to the voter, directing the voter to read the ballot, marking the voter's ballot, or directing the voter to mark the ballot.[109]

Voters DO NOT need to provide proof of their disability to receive assistance. Voters DO NOT need to provide proof that they cannot read the language in which the ballot is written. Election officers may not question a voter's assertion that they need assistance.

[107] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 85.034.

[108] TEX. ELEC. CODE §§ 64.031; 85.035 (early voting provision cross referencing same).

[109] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 64.0321.

A voter may be assisted by election officials or someone of the voter's choice (so long as the voter's choice is not 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). There is no minimum age requirement for a person to act as a voter's assistant.

If the voter is being assisted by an election officer in the general election for state and county officers, two officers from the two political parties can assist the voter unless there are not two or more election officers serving the polling place who are aligned with different parties.[110]

Any assistant to a voter who is not an election officer must fill out an oath under penalty of perjury.[111]

Poll watchers may observe a voter when the voter is preparing their ballot ONLY when the voter is assisted by a poll worker/election official. Poll watchers may request a written English language translation of any communication between a voter and a poll worker that takes place in a language other than English.[112]

HOW TO VOTE: VOTE BY MAIL

(in this state defined as: early voting by mail or mail-in voting)

31. **AUTOMATIC MAIL BALLOT:** Will I automatically be sent a ballot in the mail?

Only voters over 65 years of age and voters who are disabled may request an "Annual" Application to Vote By Mail that covers all elections occurring in the calendar year the voter sends in their request.[113] Once the request is approved, these voters will automatically be sent mail-in ballots for elections occurring during that calendar year in which they are eligible to vote.

Such applications must be received by the Early Voting Clerk of the voter's county at least 11 days before the first election in which the voter is requesting a ballot by mail (and if the 11th day before the election is a weekend or holiday, then receipt of application must occur on the first previous regular business day).[114]

A voter can obtain a mail-in ballot application on the Secretary of State Division of Elections website (https://webservices.sos.state.tx.us/forms/6-1f.pdf) or (https://bbm.sos.state.tx.us/bbm.asp), at the Secretary of State's office (Texas Secretary of State - mailing address, P.O. Box 12060, Austin, TX 78711-2060, physical address – Elections Division, 1019 Brazos St., Austin, TX 78701), at a county election office (https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/county.shtml), or, in some counties, on the website of the county election office. A voter will have to submit a new Application to Vote by Mail if they update their voter registration after moving to a new county.

[110] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 64.032.
[111] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 64.034.
[112] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 61.036
[113] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 86.0015.
[114] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 84.007.

32. **ELIGIBILITY:** Do I need a specific reason to vote by mail?

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

- Absent from their county on Election Day and during the entire Early Voting period;[115]
- Having a sickness or physical condition that prevents them from appearing at the polling place on election day without a likelihood of needing personal assistance or of injuring their health;
- Expecting to give birth within three weeks before or after Election Day[116]
- Aged 65 years of age or older on Election Day;[117] or
- Confined in jail, but eligible to vote, as discussed in Question 13.[118]

Election workers cannot ask voters whether or not they have a disability or investigate their physical condition.

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).[119] Step-by-step assistance and forms are available here.

33. **APPLICATION DEADLINE:** What is the deadline for requesting a mail-in ballot?

Mail-in ballot applications may be submitted at any point in the year and are due by close of business the 11th day before Election Day to the early voting clerk.[120] Applications for ballot by mail must be received by the early voting clerk by Friday, October 23, 2026 for the November 3, 2026 General Election.[121] The application must be received by the close of regular business or by noon, whichever is later.

Applications to vote by mail can be submitted in person or by mail, email, common or contract carrier, or fax (if a fax machine is available in the office of the early voting clerk).[122] Voters emailing should cc a secondary email they can check to show independent confirmation the email was sent. They should also look for a "received" response.

Voters who cannot print applications may also request the Secretary of State's office to send them an application for a ballot by mail here: https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/voter/reqabbm.shtml. Please note that the online form is only for an application and is not itself a way to request a mail-in ballot.

Email or Fax Requires Followup

If a voter faxes or emails an application to vote by mail, then they ***must also mail*** the original hard copy of their application to their County's Early Voting Clerk, AND the Clerk must receive that hard copy no later than the 4th BUSINESS DAY (weekends and holidays excluded) after the fax or email was

[115] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 82.001.
[116] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 82.002.
[117] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 82.003.
[118] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 82.004.
[119] TEX. ELEC. CODE §§ 101.001, .051-.052.
[120] Tex. Elec. Code § 84.007(c).
[121] *Id.*
[122] TEX. ELEC. CODE §§ 84.007(b), .008;

received.[123] The hard copy deadline for the November 3, 2026 General Election is October 29, 2026. The email or fax must be received by the 10/23 deadline, AND the hard copy must be received by the 10/29 deadline for the application to be accepted.

34. **APPLICATION ASSISTANCE:** Can someone assist me with filling out the application?

Yes, someone may assist the voter in filling out and submitting their mail-in-ballot application.

- A person who helps a voter complete the application must fill out the assistant information on the application by providing their own name, residence address, and signature, unless they are a close relative or a person registered to vote at the same address.[124] The assistant will need to fill out Box 5 of the mail-in ballot form and place a checkmark next to the following option: "Assistant – If you assisted the applicant in completing this application in the applicant's presence or mailed/emailed/faxed the application on behalf of the applicant."
- If a voter cannot sign the application because of a physical disability or inability to read or write in English, they may have a witness fill out a portion of the form at the bottom stating that to be true.[125]
    - The witness and assistant can be the same person.[126]
    - Please note that a person can only act as a witness for *one* applicant in an election, unless the person is an early voting clerk or deputy early voting clerk or the person is related to the additional applicants as a parent, grandparent, spouse, child, or sibling.[127]

35. **APPLICATION RETURN:** How do I submit my mail-in ballot application? Can someone return it for me? Does it have to be postmarked by a specific date?

The voter can mail or hand-deliver their application to their local election office, which can be found here.

Voters may submit their application for a mail-in ballot by any of the following means:[128]

- Regular mail;
- Common or contract carrier (FedEx/UPS, etc.);
- Faxing a scanned application (with original signature, no e-signature) [129]
    - 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 (send scanned attachment with original signature)[130]
    - 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.

[123] TEX. ELEC. CODE §§ 1.011; 84.007(b-1).
[124] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 84.003(b), (d).
[125] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 84.003(a)
[126] TEX. ELEC.CODE § 84.003.
[127] TEX. ELEC.CODE § 84.004.
[128] Tex. Elec. Code § 84.007.
[129] Tex. Elec. Code § 84.007.
[130] Tex. Elec. Code § 84.007.

- Personal delivery, by the voter themselves.[131] Only the voter may hand-deliver the application,[132] unless the voter is in jail, in which case the prison authorities may, in their discretion, hand-deliver the application.[133]

The voter can mail or hand-deliver their application to their local election office; locations can be found here.

36. **IDENTIFICATION:** Are there identification requirements when I return my mail-in ballot application and/or ballot?

An application for a mail-in ballot must contain one of the listed IDs:[134]

- A Texas Driver's License number,
- Texas Personal Identification Card number,
- Texas Election Identification Certificate number (not the VUID), OR
- (if the voter has none of the above forms of ID) the last four digits of their social security number.
- **We strongly recommend that people include both a Texas ID number and the last four digits of their social security number, if possible.**

People who do not have any of these types of identification must check a box stating that they do not have one.

A voter may list the number of an expired Texas Driver's License, Texas Personal Identification Card, or Texas Election Certificate on an application if the license or identification is otherwise valid..[135]

If a voter receives a rejection notice for their application due to incorrect or missing ID numbers, they can add/correct the numbers using the Secretary of State's ballot and application tracker portal. See Question 40.

Additional note about IDs for a mail-in ballot (not to be confused with a mail-in ballot application):

The ID that the voter provides on the mail-in ballot application MUST match a number associated with their voter registration application.[136] Because voters are likely to be uncertain which ID is associated with their voter file, the voter should include information for both a Texas ID and the last four digits of their social security number.

37. **RECEIVING MAIL BALLOT:** Does the ballot have to be sent to my home, or can I have it sent somewhere else? What if I don't have a home address or my address is a PO Box?

Voters should carefully read the instructions that come with the mail-in ballot.

Voters may choose to have the mail-in ballot sent to their home address or to another address *if* it fits one of the following categories:

[131] Tex. Elec. Code § 84.008.
[132] Tex. Elec. Code § 84.008; https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/forms/pol-sub/6-26f.pdf.
[133] Tex. Elec. Code § 84.009.
[134] https://www.votetexas.gov/voting-by-mail/index.html, TEX. ELEC. CODE § 84.002(a)(1-a).
[135] Tex. Elec. Code § 84.002(b-1)
[136] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 86.001(f).

- The mailing address is listed on the voter's Voter Registration Certificate;
- The address is outside of the county (for voters absent from the county);
- The address belongs to a hospital, nursing home, long-term care facility, retirement or assisted living center, or a relative – and the voter is at least 65 years old or has a physical disability; or
- The address belongs to the jail/civil commitment facility or to a relative of a person jailed/civilly committed.[137]

These categories are listed on the mail-in ballot and the voter *must* confirm the type of address the ballot is being sent to.

38. **MISSED THE APPLICATION DEADLINE:** What if I have not requested a mail-in ballot by the deadline?

No mail-in ballots will be issued for requests received after the deadline. The deadline to request a mail-in ballot for the 2026 General Election is Friday, October 23, 2026 – note that the application must be received by that date, not postmarked; for more information, see Question 33.

However, eligible voters who missed that deadline may vote early in person or on Election Day.

Voters may be eligible for an emergency ballot. See Question 52 for information on eligibility and how to apply.

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

- Ballot by Mail Tracker on TX SoS website: Ballot Tracker.
- The FPCA (Federal Postcard Application) has an Overseas and Military Ballot Tracker.

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

If the voter believes it was rejected in error, the voter should reach out to their **county** election office (https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/county.shtml).

- A voter whose mail-in ballot application or ballot has been rejected will receive a notice describing the rejection by mail, or if close to the deadline, by email or telephone. The County Clerk must inform an applicant of each defect in their application, an explanation of why their application was rejected, and instructions on submitting a corrected or second application (see below).[138] If the voter believes it was rejected in error or if the voter would like to remedy the issue, the voter should reach out to their **local** election office to determine what remedies may be available: (https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/county.shtml).
- **Application Defects:** If a voter's application for a ballot by mail was rejected, voters may correct any defects to the application by submitting a new Application for a Ballot by Mail (PDF) to their county's Early Voting Clerk by the mail-in ballot application deadline (see Question 33) with the corrected information or through the Secretary of State's Ballot By Mail

[137] Tex Elec. Code § 86.003.
[138] TEX. ELEC. CODE §§ 86.008.

Tracker (https://www.votetexas.gov/voting-by-mail/track-my-ballot.html).[139]

- If the voter's application to vote by mail or their mail in ballot has been rejected, the voter may receive their marked application or ballot back in the mail or receive a call or email from the County Elections Office. Voters should keep ALL of the vote-by-mail materials returned to them.
- **Ballot Defects:** If a voter's mail-in ballot was rejected, voters may be able to correct their ballot by submitting a "Corrective Action Form for Defective Carrier Envelope" or using the Secretary of State's Ballot By Mail Tracker at: https://www.votetexas.gov/voting-by-mail/track-my-ballot.html.[140] The voter also may receive a Corrective Action Form from their early voting clerk. The voter can complete and return the form via mail/common carrier, or go in-person to their early voting clerk to correct the defect. The Corrective Action Form must be received no later than 6 days after Election Day.[141] The Corrective Action Form is available at: https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/pol-sub/6-17f.pdf.[142]

Notification from the Early Voting Clerk about Defects

- If the Early Voting Clerk receives a carrier envelope that does not fully comply with the applicable requirements, within two days after discovery of the defect the Clerk must send the voter a notice of the defect and a corrective action form. The Clerk must include:
  - A brief explanation of each defect in the noncomplying ballot; and
  - A notice that the voter may:
    - Cancel the voter's application by mail; or
    - Correct the defect in the voter's ballot by submitting a corrective action form by mail or coming to the early voting clerk office within **six calendar days** after the election day.[143]
- If the Early Voting Clerk thinks it would not be possible for the voter to receive the notice of defect within a reasonable amount of time to correct the defect, the Clerk may call or email the voter to inform them that they may request to have the application to vote by mail cancelled, submit a corrective action form, or come vote in person in the early voting Clerk's office by the sixth day after election day to correct the defect.
- The Early Voting Clerk must also notify the voter using the Secretary of State's Ballot By Mail Tracker and, if possible, permit the voter to correct the defect online.[144]

A clerk will reject an application if the ID that the voter provides on the mail-in ballot application MUST match a number associated with their voter registration application.[145] Because voters are likely to be uncertain which ID is associated with their voter file, the voter should include information for both a Texas ID and the last four digits of their social security number.

41. **COMPLETING BALLOT:** How do I complete the mail-in ballot?

[139] https://www.votetexas.gov/voting-by-mail/track-my-ballot.html

[140] TEX. ELEC. CODE §§ 86.015; 86.011; 87.0271; 87.0411.

[141] TEX. ELEC. CODE §§ 86.011; 87.0271; 87.0411.

[142] Corrective Action Form for Defective Carrier Envelope (Form 6-17), https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/pol-sub/6-17f.pdf.

[143] Tex. Elec. Code § 86.011.

[144] Tex. Elec. Code § 86.011.

[145] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 86.001(f).

Voters should ***carefully read*** the instructions that come with the mail-in ballot, fill out all required parts of the form, and review that all required ID information has been placed onto the return envelope. A voter also must sign the ballot envelope in accordance with the instructions.[146]

NOTE: The October 23, 2026 deadline ONLY applies to **applications to vote by mail**, and not to the actual mail-in ballot.[147] See Question 43 for a list of deadlines.

There are identification requirements for completing the mail-in ballot. This identification information must be written on the ballot's "carrier" envelope.

- People who have one of the following must provide it:
  - A Texas driver's license number,
  - Texas Personal I.D. number,
  - Texas Election identification Certificate number (not the VUID), OR
  - (if the voter has none of the above forms of ID), the last four digits of their social security number.
- People who do not have any of these types of identification must check a box stating that they do not have one.
- **Remind the voter that it is best for them to place BOTH their ID number AND the last four digits of their Social Security number whenever asked to provide such information.**

Voters may use the number of an expired driver's license, identification card, or election certificate, as long as that document is otherwise valid.[148] Please note that for voters who are ages 18-69, the above IDs may be expired for up to 4 years. For voters who are 70 years of age or older, the above IDs may be expired for any length of time. Some IDs do not have expiration dates, including Texas Personal Identification Cards for persons ages 60 or older in which the card is permanent and marked "INDEF"; and Texas Election Identification Certificates for persons aged 70 or older which are permanent cards.

42. **ASSISTANCE COMPLETING BALLOT:** Can someone assist me in filling out my ballot?

A person may assist a voter with filling out and mailing a mail-in ballot, *but cannot return the mail-in ballot **in person** to the early clerk's office on behalf of the voter*. [149]

- A voter is eligible for assistance completing the ballot if they cannot read or fill out the ballot because of a physical disability or language barrier.[150] A voter is eligible for assistance mailing a ballot if a physical disability prevents the voter from depositing the envelope in the mail.[151]
- A person who helps a voter complete the ballot or deposit the envelope in the mail must fill out the assistant information on the carrier envelope and provide their own printed name, residence address, and signature; the relationship of the person providing the assistance to the voter; and whether the assistant received or accepted any form of compensation or other benefit from a candidate, campaign, or political committee in exchange for assistance.[152] The person assisting the voter must also sign a written oath that is part of the certificate on the official carrier envelope.[153]

[146] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 86.005.
[147] https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/important-election-dates.shtml#f4-1-4.
[148] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 86.002(h)
[149] Tex. Elec. Code § 86.006.
[150] Tex. Elec. Code §§ 86.010(b); 64.031.
[151] Tex. Elec. Code §§ 86.010(b); 64.031.
[152] TEX. ELEC. CODE §§ 86.010(b); 86.0051
[153] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 86.010.

    - Note: Under the election code, a person commits a criminal offense if the person compensates or offers to compensate someone for assistance with a mail ballot, or solicits, receives, or accepts compensation for assisting voters with their mail ballot.[154]
- The voter can select any person who is not 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 to be their assistant and help them in preparing the ballot and/or mailing the carrier envelope.[155]
- If a voter cannot sign the application because of a physical disability or inability to read or write in English, they may have a witness fill out a portion of the form at the bottom stating that to be true.[156]

43. **DEADLINE TO RETURN BALLOT:** What is the deadline for the ballot to be received? Does it have to be postmarked by a specific date? Can I drop it off in person?

A completed mail-in ballot must be returned and received by the county by 7 p.m. on Election Day, or by 5 p.m. the day after Election Day if the ballot is postmarked by Election Day.[157] For the General Election, if a mail-in ballot is returned in person, the county must receive it by 7 p.m. on Election Day, November 3, 2026. If the mail-in ballot is returned by mail, it must be postmarked by Tuesday, November 3, 2026 by 7 p.m. and received by Wednesday, November 4, 2026, by 5 p.m.[158]

There are different deadlines for Military/Overseas voters:

- ***Military (including spouses and dependents)/Overseas voters who completed state "Application by Mail"*:** Monday, November 9 is the deadline to receive ballots from both non-military and military voters casting ballots from outside of the United States, who submitted an Application for Ballot By Mail, not a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA), AND who placed their ballots in delivery by 7:00 p.m. on November 3, 2026, as shown by a postal service cancellation mark or a receipt mark of a common or contract carrier or a courier.
- ***Overseas voters who submitted a FPCA:*** Monday, November 9 is the deadline to receive ballots from non-military voters casting ballots from overseas, AND who placed their ballots in delivery by 7:00 p.m. on Election Day, Tuesday, November 3, 2026.
- ***Military (including spouses and dependents) who submitted a FPCA***: Monday, November 9 is the deadline to receive ballots mailed ***EITHER*** domestically or internationally. NOTE: "Military" includes members of any of the branches from the Armed Forces of the United States, the Merchant Marines of the United States, the Texas National Guard, the National Guard of another state, or members of the Military Reserves on active duty.

To drop off a ballot in person, a voter must drop off the completed ballot *in the envelope it came with* to a site designated by the local election office on Election Day.[159] In-person drop off must be completed when the polls are open. The marked ballot must be received by an election official at the time of drop off. A voter who delivers a completed ballot in-person must present an acceptable form of identification

[154] Tex. Elec. Code §§ 86.0105; 86.0052.
[155] Tex. Elec. Code § 64.032.
[156] Tex. Elec. Code § 1.001.
[157] Tex. Elec. Code § 86.007
[158] Tex. Elec. Code § 86.007
[159] Tex. Elec. Code § 86.006.

(see Question 19).[160] Contact the local election office for the exact location for dropping off the ballot: https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/voter/county.shtml.

44. **BALLOT DROP OFF LOCATIONS:** What are the locations for dropping off a 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.[161] In-person drop off must be completed while the polls are open. The marked ballot must be received by an election official at the time of drop off. A voter who delivers a completed ballot in person must present an acceptable form of identification (see Question 19).[162] Contact the local election office for the exact location for dropping off the ballot. Contact information here: https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/voter/county.shtml.

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

No. 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 29).[163]

However, a voter casting a ballot by mail who would be eligible to receive assistance at a polling place due to a physical disability and is unable to deposit the mail-in ballot in the mail, may receive assistance from someone to deposit the sealed carrier envelope in the mail.[164] (See Question 42 for more information about assistance requirements).

46. **LOST OR SPOILED BALLOT:** What if I lost my mail-in ballot, made a mistake on it (spoiled it), or I received an incorrect ballot?

If a voter has lost or spoiled a mail-in ballot, they can reach out to their local (county) election office to see if the election office can cancel the first ballot and send another one.[165] A request to cancel a mail-in ballot must be received no later than the third day before Election Day (i.e., October 31, 2026), and after the ballot is mailed to the voter, but before the carrier arrives at the Early Voting clerk's office.[166] If time is tight, a voter can cancel a mail-in ballot at a polling site, if early voting has begun, and vote in person early or on Election Day.[167] A voter may also cancel a mail-in ballot at the Early Voting Clerk's office after the close of early voting, then vote on election day.[168]

If the voter still has the spoiled absentee ballot, they should include it with their cancellation.[169] If the voter has lost the ballot, they are still 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

[160] Tex. Elec. Code § 86.006(a-1).
[161] Tex. Elec. Code § 86.006.
[162] Tex. Elec. Code § 86.006.
[163] Tex. Elec. Code § 86.006.
[164] Tex. Elec. Code § 86.010(b).
[165] Tex. Elec. Code § 64.007.
[166] https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/primary-cancellation-mail-ballots.pdf (February 2026).
[167] Tex. Elec. Code § 84.032
[168] https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/primary-cancellation-mail-ballots.pdf (February 2026).
[169] https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/primary-cancellation-mail-ballots.pdf (February 2026).

received the voter's mail-in ballot and that the voter is otherwise eligible.

47. **NON-RECEIPT OF BALLOT:** What if I requested a mail-in ballot but have not received it? What are my options for voting?

A voter who applied for but never received a mail-in ballot should contact their local election office to see if they can cancel the first ballot and have another one sent. If time is tight, the voter can cancel the mail-in ballot at their county election office (or at a polling site itself, if early voting has begun) and vote in person early or on Election Day. Because cancellation options depend on timing, the voter should contact their local election office immediately to discuss which options are available: https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/voter/county.shtml.

As a last resort, voters may 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 the voter's mail-in ballot and that the voter is otherwise eligible.

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

If a voter requested a mail-in ballot but instead chooses to vote in person, the voter must request a cancellation of their 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.[170]

Alternatively, a voter may cancel their mail-in ballot after early voting has ended by appearing in person at their county elections office and returning their mail-in ballot or executing an affidavit stating that they have not received the ballot to be voted by mail.[171]

Finally, a voter may also go to a polling place during early voting or on Election Day and turn over their mail ballot, and then vote in person.[172]

Note: The specific details for canceling a mail-in ballot vary depending on when in the election cycle it is, when in doubt please confirm with the local county elections office.

Note: A voter **cannot** change their vote after submitting their mail-in ballot by voting in person after a mail ballot was accepted as a marked ballot.

HOW TO VOTE: ABSENTEE

(in this state defined as: early voting by mail or mail-in voting)

[170] Tex. Elec. Code § 84.032.
[171] Tex. Elec. Code § 84.032(e).
[172] Tex. Elec. Code § 84.032(d).

NOTE: in Texas, "vote by mail," "mail-in voting," and "absentee voting" mean the same thing. "Absentee voting" is not a commonly used 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."

You should refer to the Early Voting By Mail Section for answers to all of these questions. Below, you will find links to specific questions in the Early Voting By Mail Section.

49. **ELIGIBILITY:** Am I eligible to request an absentee ballot?

See Question 32.

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

Absentee ballot applications must be received by the county 11 days before Election Day.[173] For the General Election, the application deadline is Friday, October 23, 2026 to the early voting clerk of the county.

See Question 33.

51. **IDENTIFICATION:** Are there any identification requirements?

See Question 36.

52. **EMERGENCY:** Is there an emergency absentee ballot? If so, am I eligible?

Yes, a voter may be eligible for an emergency mail-in ballot or a "late ballot."[174] A person is only eligible for a late ballot if they develop a sudden sickness or physical condition on or after the day before the last day to submit an absentee ballot application.[175]

An eligible physical condition is defined as follows:

1. Any sickness or physical condition that prevents the voter from appearing at the polling place on Election Day without a likelihood of needing personal assistance or of injuring their health; or
2. An expected pregnancy within three weeks before or after Election Day.[176]

For the November 3, 2026 General Election, the sudden sickness or physical condition must develop on or after **October 22, 2026**, or a pregnant person must anticipate going into labor **between October 13, 2026 and November 24 24, 2026**.

The following is *not* a qualifying reason to be eligible for a late ballot:

[173] Tex. Elec. Code § 84.007.

[174] See https://www.votetexas.gov/voting-by-mail/emergency-ballots-sickness-physical-disability.html, Tex. Elec. Code § 102.001.

[175] Tex. Elec. Code §§ 102.001.

[176] Tex. Elec. Code § 102.001 ("A qualified voter is eligible to vote a late ballot as provided by this chapter if the voter has a sickness or physical condition described by Section 82.002 that originates on or after the day before the last day for submitting an application for a ballot to be voted by mail."); Tex. Elec. Code § 82.002(a).

1. A lack transportation;
2. A requirement to appear at the voter's place of employment on Election Day; or
3. The sickness does not prevent the voter from appearing at their polling place on Election Day without a likelihood of needing personal assistance or of injuring the voter's health.[177]

A licensed physician, chiropractor, or accredited Christian Science practitioner must attest to the voter's sudden sickness or physical condition on the application.[178]

Applications for a late ballot may be found here: APPLICATION FOR EMERGENCY EARLY VOTING BALLOT. Applications for a late ballot must be submitted to the early voting clerk by 5:00 p.m. on Election Day.[179]

Individuals who use a late ballot must designate a representative to deliver their completed application to the Early Voting Clerk's office. Representatives must be at least 18 years old and may not be any of the following individuals:

1. An employee of the late ballot voter;
2. A person related to a candidate whose name appears on the ballot; or
3. A representative for another late ballot applicant in the election.

Once the representative for the late ballot voter delivers the application, the Early Voting Clerk will give the representative a ballot to hand deliver back to the voter. After the voter receives their late ballot and marks their choices, the same representative must deliver the completed ballot back to the Early Voting Clerk by **7:00 PM on Election Day**. Late ballot voters must provide a Texas Driver's License Number, a Texas Personal Identification Number, or the last four digits of their Social Security Number on the carrier envelope.[180]

Beginning September 1, 2025, voters may not use a late ballot to vote if they will be out of their county of residence on election day due to the death of a close family member.[181]

Overseas and military voters or their spouse and dependents may also use the Federal Write In Absentee Ballot (FWAB)[182] option if they have not received their official ballot. The FWAB is outlined in Question 11. The application for a FWAB can be found here.

In order to use a FWAB, the voter must be eligible to use the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) and have filed the FPCA with their early voting clerk **by the eleventh day before Election Day**. If a FWAB is submitted before a FPCA is received by an early voting clerk, the clerk will ask the voter to submit a FPCA by mail, fax, or as an attachment to an email before another FWAB is filed.[183]

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

[177] Tex. Elec. Code § 82.002(b).
[178] Tex. Elec. Code § 102.002.
[179] Tex. Elec. Code § 102.003(b).
[180] https://www.votetexas.gov/voting-by-mail/emergency-ballots-sickness-physical-disability.
[181] Tex. Elec. Code § 103.001; Repealed by Acts 2025, 89th Leg., ch. 1184 (S.B. 2753), § 31(1), eff. Sept. 1, 2025.
[182] Tex. Elec. Code § 105.003.
[183] More information about FCPA and FAWB can be found here: https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2024-02.shtml.

See Question 35.

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

    A voter can check the Ballot by Mail Tracker on the TX SoS website: Ballot Tracker

    For overseas and military voters, the Federal Post Card Application has a tracker: FPCA Ballot Tracker.

55. **APPLICATION OR BALLOT REJECTED:** I learned my absentee ballot application and/or ballot was rejected. How can I confirm this and what can I do to fix any errors or get another one?

    See Question 40.

56. **COMPLETING BALLOT:** How do I complete the absentee ballot?

    See Question 41.

57. **ASSISTANCE COMPLETING BALLOT:** Can someone assist me filling out the ballot?

    See Question 42.

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

    See Question 43.

59. **BALLOT DROP OFF LOCATIONS:** Where can I drop off a ballot (instead of mailing it)?

    See Question 44.

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

    See Question 45.

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

    See Question 46.

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

    See Question 47.

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

    See Question 48.

64. **IN PERSON ABSENTEE:** Where do I vote in-person absentee? When can I do this?

Anyone can vote early in person during the early voting period (see Question 26); there are several options for voting in person even if the voter applied for and received an absentee ballot (see Question 48), and the voter can also drop off their completed mail-in ballot in person on Election Day (see Question 44).

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."

POLLING PLACE ISSUES

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

- First, confirm whether the voter is at their correct polling location. Early voting locations may be different from the voter's regularly assigned polling place.
    - A voter's polling location can be found with the voter's registration record by going to (https://goelect.txelections.civixapps.com/ivis-mvp-ui/#/login). There will usually be links on the right next to the voter's registration record or on the voter's county election website.
    - Note: voters in Texas can vote at **any** location in their county during early vote.
    - Note: a voter in a "countywide voting" county can vote at any location in that county on Election Day. A list of the counties who are using countywide voting is available at this link: countywide-polling-place-program.
- Reconfirm on the voter's county website that their current location is a polling place for this specific election, or whether there have been any last minute changes to their polling location
- Make sure to ask the voter whether they are at the correct entrance.

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

The voters should *stay in line.* They should not leave the line *for any reason*. A voter inside or waiting to enter the polling location by 7:00 p.m. is entitled to vote (see Question 18).[184]

For voters with a mobility problem, see Question 77.

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

- The voter should **immediately** notify election officers if there are problems with the voting equipment at the polling location.
    - In the case of malfunctioning voting machines, the presiding Election Judge may have

[184] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 41.032(a).

voters:

- Use another voting system that has been adopted for use in the election;
- Use regular paper ballots, whether early voting ballots or ballots for regular voting on election day; or
- Have voters manually mark the electronic system ballots that were furnished for use with the malfunctioning equipment and have those ballots processed as regular paper ballots.[185]

- A voter should request a paper ballot if one is not offered and no other voting machine is made available for them to use.

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

Electioneering or campaigning involves making communications, verbally, by wearing certain clothing, or sporting signs, or engaging in other conduct regarding a candidate, a political party, or a measure on the ballot, within 100 feet of any polling place, within 20 feet of a parking space designated for curbside voting, or within 1000 feet of a polling place if using a sound amplification device like loudspeakers.[186]

Prohibited electioneering conduct:

- People may not loiter or electioneer for/against any candidate, measure, or political party on the ballot within 100 feet of the door to any polling place or within 20 feet of a parking space designated for curbside voting.[187] The rules prohibit anyone from posting, using, or distributing political signs or literature within 100 feet of any polling place or within 20 feet of a parking space designated for curbside voting.[188]
- People also may not make a political speech or electioneer for or against any candidate, measure, or political party on the ballot, using a sound amplification device (i.e., loudspeakers, speakers in vehicles) within 1,000 feet of the building in which a polling place is located.[189]

While electioneering conduct is prohibited, a polling location that is located in a public building and has restrooms open to the public (e.g., courthouse) cannot restrict the use of its restroom facilities to voters only. If the building has restrooms open to the public, then the public must be allowed to use them, regardless of whether visitors intend to vote. However, a presiding judge has discretion to remove a person if they determine that an individual is loitering or electioneering.[190]

While a voter may bring in written materials into voting stations to assist them in casting their ballot, election judges and early voting clerks may use their discretion in determining if a voter is electioneering for or against any candidate and/or measure or political party through the use of written materials.[191]

[185] Tex. Elec. Code § 125.006.

[186] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 61.010, § 61.003, § 61.004; *See also Minn. Voters Alliance v. Mansky*, 138 S. Ct. 1876 (2018)

[187] Tex. Elec. Code § 61.003.

[188] Tex. Elec. Code § 61.003.

[189] Tex. Elec. Code § 61.004.

[190] Tex. Sec'y of State, Elec. Advisory No. 2026-13 (Apr. 13, 2026), https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2026-13.shtml.

[191] Tex. Sec'y of State, Elec. Advisory No. 2026-13 (Apr. 13, 2026), https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2026-13.shtml.

The voter has a right to vote without anyone trying to influence their vote in any way while at the polling location. Poll workers have the authority to enforce these rules.[192]

69. **VOTER CONDUCT:** What am I prohibited from wearing or doing in a polling place? Can I take photos inside?

What apparel in the polling place counts as electioneering?

Inside the polling place or within 100 feet of any outside door through which voters enter the building where the polling place is located, a person inside the polling place cannot wear any of the following: a badge, insignia, emblem, or other similar communicative device relating to a candidate, measure, or political party appearing on the ballot, or to the conduct of the election.[193] A person also may not wear apparel or a similar communicative device relating to a candidate, measure, or political party appearing on the ballot in the current election, but a person may wear apparel relating to a candidate, measure, or political party that does NOT appear on the ballot in the current election.[194] Violation of this rule is a Class C misdemeanor.[195]

Can a voter take photos and record?

Other than election officers conducting official election duties or a person *who is employed at the polling place acting in the course of their employment*, no person is allowed to use a wireless communication device **within a room in which voting is taking place.** Voters also may not use any mechanical or electronic means to record images or sounds **within 100 feet of a voting station**.[196]

The following devices are prohibited:[197]

- Cell phones
- Cameras
- Tablet computers
- Laptop computers
- Sound recorders
- Drones
- Smart watches capable of messaging or recording sound or images
- Any other device that may be used to record sound or images.

Police bodycams are also prohibited from recording within 100 feet of a voting station.[198]

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[192] Tex. Sec'y of State, Elec. Advisory No. 2026-13 (Apr. 13, 2026), https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2026-13.shtml.

[193] Tex. Elec. Code § 61.010

[194] See https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/laws/advisory2023-01.shtml; see also https://www.sos.state.tx.us/about/newsreleases/2022/110722.shtml.

[195] Tex. Elec. Code § 61.010(c).

[196] Tex. Elec. Code § 61.014.

[197] https://www.votetexas.gov/voting/allowed-at-the-polling-place.html; https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/laws/advisory2023-16.shtml; Tex. Sec'y of State, Elec. Advisory No. 2026-13 (Apr. 13, 2026), https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2026-13.shtml.

[198] Tex. Sec'y of State, Elec. Advisory No. 2026-13 (Apr. 13, 2026), https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2026-13.shtml.

A person "may use wireless communication devices such as cell phones, tablets, or laptop computers outside of a room in which voting is taking place, including in areas within 100 feet of the voting stations, as long as the devices are not used to record sound or images."[199] This means that a voter may check email, scroll, or review a sample ballot on a wireless communication device if they are outside of a room in which voting is taking place, but they may not use the device for a phone or video call.[200]
An election judge may use their authority to require a person to deactivate such devices or to require a person who does not comply to leave the polling place.[201]

NOTE: However, an election judge may use their authority/discretion to allow a voter to use certain cell phone programs/applications to assist voters with disabilities (e.g., to translate verbal communication into sign language, text to voice applications, text magnifying applications, etc.), but the voter will need to request this accommodation. Persons who are using wireless communication devices for employment-related matters because the polling place is located at a business location are also allowed to use their wireless devices.

70. **POLL WORKER CONDUCT:** What is a poll worker prohibited from wearing or doing in a polling place?

A poll worker cannot wear any badge, insignia, or emblem that relates to a candidate, a political party, a measure, or the election. A poll worker, while on duty, must wear a tag or official badge that indicates the person's name and title or position and this tag/badge must be worn inside the polling place or within 100 feet of any outside door through which voters enter the building where the polling place is located.[202]

Note: Under Texas law, a "poll worker" is different from a "poll watcher." A poll watcher is a person appointed by a political party, a candidate, or proponents/opponents of a measure to observe the conduct of an election. There are specific rules around what a poll watcher can or cannot do and if necessary, their removal from the polling place.[203]

71. **INTIMIDATION:** Are there any other specific restrictions on conduct outside of a polling place? What should I do if I feel unsafe or uncomfortable outside the polling place?

Under both state and federal law voters have the right to vote free from any intimidation.[204] Section 11(b) of the federal Voting Rights Act prohibits a person (whether it is a person acting under the color of state law or a private individual) from intimidating, threatening, or coercing, or attempting to intimidate, threaten, or coerce any person for voting or attempting to vote.

The definition of "intimidate" is broad and not confined to only physical acts. Intimidation is both fact-specific and contextual. Examples of Intimidation might include conduct such as following a voter in

[199] Tex. Sec'y of State, Elec. Advisory No. 2026-13 (Apr. 13, 2026), https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2026-13.shtml.
[200] Tex. Sec'y of State, Elec. Advisory No. 2026-13 (Apr. 13, 2026), https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2026-13.shtml.
[201] Tex. Sec'y of State, Elec. Advisory No. 2026-13 (Apr. 13, 2026), https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2026-13.shtml; Tex. Sec'y of State, Form 7-39 Notice of Prohibition of Certain Devices, https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/pol-sub/7-39f.pdf.
[202] TEX. ELEC. CODE § 61.010.
[203] Office of Sec'y of State of Texas, Elections Division, Poll Watcher's Guide (Sept. 2025), Poll Watcher's Guide
[204] Tex. Elec. Code § 276.001; Section 11(b) of the Voting Rights Act, 52 U.S.C. § 10307(b).

the polling place, loudly making statements about a particular voter, or creating a hostile environment in the polling place through other means.

If a voter feels intimidated, the voter should alert one of the presiding or alternate election judges at the polling place. The voter can also call the county election clerk to make a report.

72. **CHALLENGE:** Someone is formally challenging my vote. What should I do?

Election officials can challenge a voter's qualifications to vote during early voting or on Election Day. And if an election official is challenging a voter's qualifications, then the voter is entitled to vote a provisional ballot. See Question 22, Question 23, and Question 24, describing the provisional ballot process. If the challenge is based on the voter's lack of a photo ID, then the voter will have 6 days from Election Day to verify their identification. See Question 22.

Poll watchers **may not** challenge a voter's qualifications at the polls.[205] Poll watchers are appointed by political parties, candidates, or a specific-purpose political action committee that supports or opposes a measure. [206] They may observe the election for irregularities, and must wear a nametag or badge clearly indicating that they are a poll watcher. Poll watchers may not converse with an election official (except to call into question an irregularity or a violation of law), converse with a voter, take pictures inside the polling location, record video or audio inside the polling location, or communicate in any manner with the voter about the election.

Challenges based on registration: See Question 14.

Note: A private citizen is challenging my registration. What do I need to know?

Any registered voter may challenge the registration of another voter living in the same county after filing a sworn statement with the local registrar's office that (1) identifies the voter being challenged and (2) gives a reason for challenging the voter's registration, that is based on the "personal knowledge" of the challenger.[207] Mass challenges to voter registrations are permitted under Texas law.

Therefore, as long as the challenger has "personal knowledge," they can challenge a voter's registration based on residence, citizenship, death, felony conviction, or any number of reasons having to do with one of the qualifications for voting.

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

Texas does not have state laws against police or military presence at the polling place. Voters should carry on with their voting activities. Federal law explicitly prohibits the presence of armed *federal* agents at the polls.[208]

[205] Tex. Elec. Code Tex. Elec. Code §§ 33.0015.
[206] Tex. Elec. Code § 33.002, § 33.003, § 33.004.
[207] Tex. Elec. Code § § 16.091, § 16.092.
[208] 18 U.S.C. §§ 592, 593, and 595

Police officers must turn off police bodycams within the 100-foot zone of a voting station, whether they are on or off duty.[209] The general prohibition against people bringing a firearm onto the premises of a polling place does not apply to licensed peace officers, regardless of whether the officer is on or off duty.[210]

However, generally, under Texas state law[211] and federal law,[212] voters have the right to vote free from any intimidation. If a voter feels intimidated by the police or military presence see Question 71. Section 11(b) of the federal Voting Rights Act prohibits a person (whether it is a person acting under the color of state law or a private individual) from intimidating, threatening, or coercing, or attempting to intimidate, threaten, or coerce any person for voting or attempting to vote. The definition of "intimidate" is broad and not confined to only physical acts. Whether there is intimidation is fact-specific. Intimidation might include conduct such as following a voter in the polling place, loudly making statements about a particular voter, or creating a hostile environment in the polling place through other means.

Additionally, a person who is arrested at a polling place while voting or waiting to vote shall be permitted to vote, if entitled to do so, before being removed from the polling place.[213]

74. **THOUGHT WAS REGISTERED:** My name isn't on the voter registration roll but I thought I was registered. What should I do?

For a check list of questions to pursue with the caller and the various scenarios in which a voter may not be appearing on the rolls, see Question 21.

Voters can determine whether they are registered by checking the Texas Secretary of State's website (https://goelect.txelections.civixapps.com/ivis-mvp-ui/#/login) or by calling the voter registrar's office in the county where they reside (phone numbers are available at https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/votregduties.shtml).

Voters can confirm their status on the website by using:

- Their Voter Unique Identifier (VUID), which appears on their voter registration certificate;
- Their TX driver's license number, if they provided it when they applied for voter registration; or
- Their first and last name, county of residence, and birthdate.

If the voter is not able to confirm their registration at the polling place, the voter should request a provisional ballot as a last resort. Before receiving the provisional ballot, the voter must complete an affidavit stating that they are eligible and registered to vote in that precinct. After the election, the Early Voting Ballot Board will determine whether the provisional ballot will be counted.

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

See Question 22, Question 23, and Question 24**.**

Voting a provisional ballot should always be a last resort: Nevertheless, as required by the federal Help America Vote Act, a provisional ballot must be offered to:

[209] Tex. Sec'y of State, Elec. Advisory No. 2026-13 (Apr. 13, 2026), https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2026-13.shtml.
[210] https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/laws/advisory2024-06.shtml.
[211] Tex. Elec. Code § 276.001.
[212] Section 11(b) of the Voting Rights Act, 52 U.S.C. § 10307(b).
[213] Tex. Elec. Code § 32.075

- Any voter who says they are registered and is eligible to vote in the precinct in which they are appearing, and
- Any voter whose eligibility is called into question and
- Any voter who does not have one of the accepted forms of photo ID.[214]

Before receiving the provisional ballot, the voter must complete an affidavit stating that they are eligible and registered to vote in that precinct. If a voter casts a provisional ballot because they do not have the required identification, an election officer must give the voter written information explaining the procedure the voter must follow to have their vote counted.[215] After the election, the Early Voting Ballot Board (also known as the Provisional Voting Ballot Board) will determine whether the provisional ballot will be counted.

WHY DID I GET A PROVISIONAL BALLOT? The voter should ask why they were offered a provisional ballot. Typically, a voter should be offered a provisional ballot only when:[216]

- The voter does not have the proper identification;
- The voter's name is not on the list of registered voters for the polling location and their voter registration cannot be verified while at the polling location;
- A voter whose name on their ID is not substantially similar to the name of the official list of registered voters;
- A voter whose identity cannot be verified by the ID presented;
- A voter who has received a disability exemption, but does not have a voter registration certificate indicating such an exemption;
- The voter applied for an Early Voting/mail-in ballot and did not vote early by mail;
- A voter who votes during the polling hours that are extended by a state or federal court;
- A voter who is registered to vote by attempting to vote in a precinct other than the one in which the voter is registered;
- A voter who is on the precinct list of registered voters, but whose registered residence address is outside the political subdivision for which the voter is seeking to vote;
- Other ____with an explanation.[217]

PROVISIONAL BALLOT BECAUSE OF ID ISSUE: If a voter casts a provisional ballot because of an ID issue, they must visit their county elections office IN PERSON within six calendar days of the election (Monday, November 9, 2026 for the General Election), or their provisional ballot will not be counted.

- They will need to bring an acceptable photo ID, or if they don't have a photo ID, then they will need to bring a supporting ID and fill out a Reasonable Impediment Declaration, or, if applicable, submit one of the temporary affidavits (e.g., religious objection or natural disaster) or, if applicable, qualify for a permanent disability exemption.
- If the county can validate the voter's information, then their provisional ballot will be counted.

AVAILABILITY OF PROVISIONAL BALLOTS: Provisional ballots should be offered at ALL early voting locations. Voters should not have to drive to the main early voting location to vote a provisional ballot.[218]

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[214] Tex. Elec. Code § 63.001.
[215] Tex. Elec. Code § 63.001(g)(2).
[216] Tex. Elec. Code § 63.011.
[217] 1 T.A.C. § 81.172.
[218] https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/no-pressure-refresher-provisional-ballots-2-16-24.pdf.
Tex. Elec. Code § 63.0015

PROVISIONAL BALLOT BECAUSE OF PREVIOUSLY APPLIED FOR MAIL-IN BALLOT: Voters who applied for a mail-in ballot but instead choose to vote in person will be offered a provisional ballot if the Early Clerk's office did not receive the voter's cancellation request within 3 days of Election Day.

ACCESSIBILITY/ASSISTANCE

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

Yes, voters are entitled to receive help to navigate the voting process, including assistance with the voting systems on which a voter must vote. See Question 30 for information on in-person assistance at the polls.

If there are equipment failures, the voter should **immediately** notify election officers if there are problems with the voting equipment at the polling location. See Question 67, for more information on Equipment Failure.

77. **PHYSICAL DISABILITY:** I have a physical disability and need assistance. Is my polling place ADA compliant? Does my voting location have an accessible voting system?

All Texas polling locations and voting machines must be accessible to voters with physical disabilities.[219] If a voter needs assistance at the polls, voters should tell the election official that they are a voter who needs help to vote. Voters do not need to provide proof of any disability.[220]

Voters with a "mobility problem that substantially impairs a person's ability to ambulate" can go to the front of the line to vote. Anyone assisting the voter with mobility problems can go to the front of the line, too. There should be a sign at the entrance to the polling place stating this right.[221]

For those with physical disabilities who require assistance,

- see Question 19 for information about obtaining a photo identification exemption for a disability,
- see Question 30 for information on in-person assistance at the polls,
- see Question 34 for assistance filling out a mail-in ballot application,
- see Question 42 for assistance completing a mail-in ballot,
- See Question 69 for information about voter conduct as it relates to wireless communication devices and voters with disabilities, and
- see Question 80 on the availability of Curbside Voting.

Polling places must meet the following strict accessibility standards:[222]

[219] Office of Sec'y of State of Tex., *Services Available to Voters with Disabilities*, https://www.votetexas.gov/voters-with-special-needs/index.html

[220] Office of Sec'y of State of Tex., *Services Available to Voters with Disabilities*, https://www.votetexas.gov/voters-with-special-needs/.

[221] Tex. Elec. Code § 63.0015

[222] Office of Sec'y of State of Tex., *Services Available to Voters with Disabilities* https://www.votetexas.gov/voters-with-special-needs/

- A location on the ground floor that can be entered from the street or via an elevator with doors that open at least 36 inches;
- Doors, entrances, and exits used to enter or leave the polling place that are at least 32 inches wide;
- Any curb next to the main entrance to the polling place must have curb-cuts or temporary non-slip ramps;
- Stairs necessary to enter or leave the polling place must have handrails on each side and a non-slip ramp;
- Removal of all barriers such as gravel, automatically closing gates, closed doors without lever-type handles, or any other barrier that impedes the path of a person with physical disabilities to the voting station;
- Voting systems that are accessible to voters with physical disabilities and can accommodate no vision, low vision, no hearing, low hearing, limited manual dexterity, limited reach, limited strength, no mobility, low mobility, or any combination of the foregoing (except the combination of no hearing and no vision); and.
- Each polling place must offer at least one type of accessible voting equipment. This equipment allows voters with disabilities to vote directly on the system or assist them in marking the paper ballot. Depending on the type of system, voters with disabilities may use headphones or other assistive devices to help them vote independently and secretly.

78. **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, voters can receive assistance at the polls:

- Voters who are physically disabled or unable to read or mark the ballot can receive assistance with their ballot at the polling place. See Question 30 for information on in-person assistance at the polls.
- Voters who cannot speak or communicate in English or use sign language may have an interpreter help them communicate with poll workers. See Question 79 for more information in Interpreters.

79. **LANGUAGE ACCESS:** I am not an English speaker. What language resources are available? Can I bring someone in the booth to help me understand the ballot?

Yes, a person of the voter's choice—other than an employer, an agent of the employer, or an officer or agent of their union—may assist a voter in understanding the ballot.[223] There is no minimum age requirement for someone to act as a voter's assistant. Election workers are required to assist voters who do not choose their own assistant – on Election Day, two election workers will assist the voter.[224]

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.

[223] Tex. Elec. Code § 64.032.
[224] Tex. Elec. Code §§ 64.032(a)-(b).

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 their local election officials (e.g., county clerk or election administrator) before the election and request assistance.

- The assistant is to take the following oath affirming they will provide only limited assistance:
  - The assistant must affirm they:
    - Will not suggest, by word, sign, or gesture, how the voter should vote;
    - Will confine assistance to reading the ballot to the voter, directing the voter to read the ballot, marking the voter's ballot, or directing the voter to mark the ballot;
    - Will prepare the voter's ballot as the voter directs;
    - Did not pressure or coerce the voter into choosing them to provide assistance;
    - They are not 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;
    - They will not communicate information about how the voter has voted to another person; and
    - They understand that if assistance is provided to a voter who is not eligible for assistance, the voter's ballot may not be counted.[225]

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:[226]

- **Statewide coverage for Spanish**
- Dallas County: Vietnamese
- Harris County: Chinese (including Taiwanese), Vietnamese
- Maverick County: All other Native American tribes
- Polk County: All other Native American languages
- Tarrant County: Vietnamese

Poll watchers may observe a voter when the voter is preparing their ballot ONLY when the voter is assisted by a poll worker/election official. Poll watchers may request a written English language translation of any communication between a voter and a poll worker that takes place in a language other than English.[227]

80. **CURBSIDE VOTING:** Is curbside voting available? How do I request it?

Yes, a voter who is unable to enter the polling place without personal assistance or likelihood of injuring their health may request that an election officer deliver a ballot to them at the polling place entrance or curb.[228] When a voter votes curbside, their car becomes their voting station, so they are entitled to the

[225] Tex. Elec. Code §§ 64.034.

[226] 52 U.S.C.A. § 10508; Tex. Elec. Code §§ 272.001–272.011; Voting Act Amendments of 2021, Determinations Under Section 203, https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/12/08/2021-26547/voting-rights-act-amendments-of-2006-determinations-under-section-203. For the most up to date Section 203 Language Determinations, *see also* https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/about/voting-rights/voting-rights-determination-file.html.

[227] Tex. Elec. Code § 61.036; note a poll watcher is not entitled to get this translation if the voter is assisted by anyone other than a poll worker or election official.

[228] Tex. Elec. Code § 64.009(a).

opportunity to vote their ballot privately and without interference of campaigners or bystanders as if they were in the voting booth.[229]

The voter must complete and sign a form, provided by the election officer, that states: "I swear (or affirm) under penalty of perjury that I am physically unable to enter the polling place without personal assistance or likelihood of injuring my health, or I am requesting a reasonable accommodation under Section 1.022, Election Code. Therefore, I am requesting to vote outside the polling place."[230]

If four or more election officers are present at the polling place, two election officers must bring the ballot to the voter at the polling place entrance or curb.[231]
If a voter is escorting another person who qualifies for curbside voting because they are unable to enter the polling place without personal assistance or likelihood of injuring their health, that voter can request that an election officer bring them a ballot at the polling place entrance or curb as well.[232]

After marking the ballot, the voter can give the ballot to an election officer to deposit it in the ballot box or the voter can request that a person accompanying them be permitted to select and cast their ballot in the ballot box instead of an election officer.[233] However, the voter must mark their own ballot (unless they are also entitled to "assistance" in voting, see Question 30).[234]

The area for curbside voting should be adequately marked. At each polling place an area about the size of a parking space should be designated for curbside voting and clearly marked with a sign:

- Indicating that the space is reserved for use by a voter who is unable to enter the polling place; and
- Displaying, in large font that is clearly readable from a vehicle, a telephone number that a voter may call or text to request assistance from an election officer at the polling place.[235]
    (a) NOTE: This number may go directly to the election officers at the polling place or may be routed to the county elections office.
- As an alternative to displaying a telephone number, a parking space may comply with the requirements by providing the voter with a button or intercom that the voter may use to request assistance from an election officer. [236]

81. **VOTER GUIDE:** Can I bring a voting guide or reference notes with me into the voting booth?

Voters are allowed to bring written or printed materials into voting stations to assist them in casting their ballot.[237] Election judges and early voting clerks may use their discretion in determining if a voter is electioneering – which is prohibited – for or against any candidate, measure or political party through the use of written materials.[238]

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[229] Tex. Sec'y of State, Elec. Advisory No. 2026-13 (Apr. 13, 2026), https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2026-13.shtml.
[230] Tex. Elec. Code § 64.009(a-3).
[231] Tex. Elec. Code § 64.009(a-5).
[232] Tex. Elec. Code § 64.009(a-6).
[233] https://www.votetexas.gov/voting/curbside-voting.html.
[234] Tex. Elec. Code § 64.009(a).
[235] Tex. Elec. Code § 64.009(a-1).
[236] Tex. Elec. Code § 64.009(a-2).
[237] Tex. Elec. Code § 61.011; Election Advisory No. 2023-01 Re: Certain Activities in Vicinity of Polling Places (April 17, 2023), https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2023-01.shtml.
[238] Tex. Elec. Code § 81.002.

Voters cannot use electronic devices (e.g., phones, cameras, tablet computers, sound recorders) within a room in which voting is taking place and they cannot use devices to record images or sound within 100 feet of voting stations.[239] A person "may use wireless communication devices such as cell phones, tablets, or laptop computers outside of a room in which voting is taking place, including in areas within 100 feet of the voting stations, as long as the devices are not used to record sound or images."[240] This means that a voter may check email, scroll, or review a sample ballot on a wireless communication device if they are outside of a room in which voting is taking place, but they may not use the device for a phone or video call.[241] See Question 69 for more information about devices voters can and cannot use while voting. If voters have questions regarding the use of electronic devices, they can contact the Secretary of State's office. Contact numbers include: 1 (800) 252-VOTE (8683) and (512) 463-5650.[242]

While a voter may bring in written materials into voting stations to assist them in casting their ballot, election judges and early voting clerks may use their discretion in determining if a voter is electioneering for or against any candidate, measure or political party through the use of written materials.[243]

STATE SPECIFIC SUPPLEMENT

82. **POLL WATCHER CONDUCT:** What are poll watchers? What can poll watchers do or not do at the polls?

Poll watchers and what they MAY do:

- Poll watchers are appointed by political parties, candidates, or a specific-purpose political action committee that supports or opposes a measure on the ballot.
- Poll watchers may observe a voter when the voter is preparing their ballot ONLY when the voter is assisted by a poll worker/election official. Poll watchers may request a written English language translation of any communication between a voter and a poll worker that takes place in a language other than English.[244]
- Observe and report on the election for irregularities.[245]
- A watcher is entitled to sit or stand near enough to see and hear the election officers conducting the observed election activity except as prohibited by law.[246]
- Observe assistance provided to voters by election officials and inspect the ballot to determine if it was prepared in accordance with the voter's wishes.[247]
- Poll watchers may make written notes while on duty. Before poll watchers can leave a polling place while the polls are still open, however, they may be required to leave the notes with

[239] Tex. Elec. Code § 81.002.
[240] Tex. Sec'y of State, Elec. Advisory No. 2026-13 (Apr. 13, 2026), https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2026-13.shtml.
[241] Tex. Sec'y of State, Elec. Advisory No. 2026-13 (Apr. 13, 2026), https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2026-13.shtml.
[242] Election Advisory No. 2023-01 Re: Certain Activities in Vicinity of Polling Places (April 17, 2023), https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2023-01.shtml.
[243] Tex. Sec'y of State, Elec. Advisory No. 2026-13 (Apr. 13, 2026), https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2026-13.shtml.
[244] Tex. Elec. Code § 61.036.
[245] Tex. Elec. Code § 33.0015
[246] Tex. Elec. Code § 33.056(a).
[247] Tex. Elec. Code § 33.057(a).

another person on duty at the polling place, selected by the watcher, for retention until the watcher returns to duty.[248]

Poll watchers MAY NOT do:

- Poll watchers may not converse with an election official, except to call into question an irregularity or a violation of law. [249]
- Poll watchers may not converse with a voter, or communicate in any manner with the voter about the election. [250]
- Poll watchers may not record audio or video or take photos inside the polling place. [251]
- Poll watchers may not observe a voter voting independently or a voter being assisted by a person of the voter's choice, unless election officers are acting as the voter's assistant.[252]
- Poll watchers may not challenge a voter's qualifications.
- Poll watchers may not disrupt the election or harass voters.[253]

Total number allowed at polls:

- A maximum of seven (7) watchers may be appointed for each early voting polling place (no more than two may be on duty at the same location and at the same time). [254]
- A maximum of two (2) watchers may be appointed for each precinct polling place, meeting place for an early voting ballot board (and signature verification committee, if one is appointed), or central counting station involved in the election.[255]

83. **TRANSPORTATION TO THE POLLS:** Can someone else other than the voter provide transportation to the polls to voters?

Yes, someone else can drive the voter to the polls. If that person assists seven or more voters with transportation during the early voting period and on election day[256], that person has to fill out a form providing their name and address and whether they are providing any other type of voter assistance (other than transportation).[257] Within 30 days after the election date, the county clerk will report to the Secretary of State information regarding any person who assisted seven or more voters with transportation during the early voting period and on election day.

If the person is simultaneously driving six or fewer voters to the polls, they do not need to fill out a form.

84. **FIREARMS/HANDGUNS:** Who can bring a firearm/handgun to a polling place?

There is a prohibition on bringing a firearm to a polling place, but the prohibition does not apply to a licensed peace officer, regardless of whether the officer is on or off duty. See Question 73 for more

[248] Tex. Elec. Code § 33.056.
[249] Tex. Elec. Code § 33.058(a)(1).
[250] Tex. Elec. Code § 33.058(a)(2).
[251] https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2022-17.shtml; Office of Sec'y of State of Texas, Elections Division, Election Advisory No. 2022-09: NEW LAW: Changes to Poll Watcher Requirements Under House Bill 3107 and Senate Bill 1 (Feb. 4, 2022). https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/laws/advisory2022-09.shtml.
[252] Tex. Elec. Code § 33.057(b).
[253] Tex. Elec. Code § 32.075; https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/pollwatchers-guide.pdf
[254] Tex. Elec. Code § 33.007(b)
[255] Tex. Elec. Code § 33.007(a).
[256] Tex. Elec. Code § 64.009(f); H.B. 521 (2025).
[257] Tex. Elec. Code § 64.009(f).

information about peace officers around polling places. Open carry legislation does not change this prohibition;[258] no one except licensed peace officers may carry handguns into the polling place.[259]

85. **NATURAL DISASTERS:** What do I do if my ID for voting was destroyed or I can't access it due to a natural disaster?

Voters in counties covered by a disaster declaration from the Texas Governor have the ability to vote a provisional ballot without providing an ID. In order for their votes to be counted, such voters must then appear at their voter registrar's office within **six (6) calendar days after election day** and sign an affidavit stating that the voter did not have any of the required identification because such identification was destroyed or unable to be accessed as a result of the natural disaster declared by the Governor. Voters who do not possess an acceptable form of photo identification and cannot reasonably obtain one may present a supporting form of identification and execute a Reasonable Impediment Declaration noting the voter's reasonable impediment to obtaining an acceptable form of photo identification and stating that the information contained in the declaration is true, that the voter is the same individual personally appearing at the polling place to sign the declaration, and that the voter faces a reasonable impediment to procuring an acceptable form of photo identification.[260]

The supporting forms of ID that can be presented if the voter does not possess one of the forms of acceptable photo ID and cannot reasonably obtain one are the following. An original or a copy is acceptable.

- Any government document that shows the voter's name and an address, including the voter's voter registration certificate;
- A current utility bill;
- A bank statement;
- A government check;
- A paycheck; or
- A certified domestic (from a U.S. state or territory) birth certificate or a document confirming birth admissible in a court of law which establishes the voter's identity (which may include a foreign birth document).[261]

86. **TEMPORARY RESIDENCE IN SHELTER:** How can I vote if I am staying in a shelter?

Given the temporary nature of living at a shelter, voters may not want to register to vote using the shelter address. However, if a voter considers the shelter to be their home for now, then they can register at that address. If the shelter cannot receive mail, then a voter may use a P.O. Box or other mailing address to which a new voter registration certificate can be mailed. If the shelter can receive mail, a voter could put that address as their mailing address on the voter registration application.[262]

For more in-depth information for voters temporarily staying in a shelter or otherwise dealing with fallout from a natural disaster, visit: https://www.votetexas.gov/harvey/index.html.

[258] Tex. Sec'y of State, Elec. Advi. No. 2026-13 (Apr. 13, 2026), https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/advisory2026-13.shtml.
[259] https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/laws/advisory2024-09.shtml.
[260] https://www.votetexas.gov/harvey/index.html
[261] https://www.votetexas.gov/voting/need-id.html
[262] https://www.votetexas.gov/harvey/index.html

87. **TERMINOLOGY:** What election terms are different in Texas?

    Any use of the term “County Elections Office” means whichever one of those two offices runs the county elections in the voter’s county. All elections in Texas are run at the county level by either an Elections Administrator or a County Clerk. Texas does not use the terms “Board of Election,” “Election Board,” or “County Election Board.”

    The terms “Absentee Voting” or “Voting Absentee” are not used in Texas, rather “Vote by Mail,” “Voting by Mail,” “Application to Vote By Mail,” and “Application for Ballot By Mail” are the terms used in Texas. Texas does not use the term “In-Person Absentee Voting,” rather the terms “Early Voting” or “In-Person Early Voting” are used.

88. **QUESTIONS:** Who should I contact if I have questions about any of the above?

    The County Voter Registration Officials Contact List is here. The County websites are here.
    TX Secretary of State website, election complaint form, and toll-free phone # 1-800-252-VOTE (8683).