

Frequently Asked Questions

Massachusetts – General Election 2024

Last Updated: 9/11/2024

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

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

REGISTERING TO VOTE

ELECTION DAY

EARLY VOTE

VOTE BY MAIL

ABSENTEE

POLLING PLACE ISSUES

ACCESSIBILITY /ASSISTANCE

STATE SPECIFIC SUPPLEMENT

Table of Contents

REGISTERING TO VOTE

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?
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?
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

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: no-excuse early voting by mail)

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: excuse-required voting by mail)

- 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. **CHILDREN:** Can I bring my children into the booth with me?
- 83. **ELECTION AUTHORITIES:** What entities are responsible for Massachusetts elections?
- 84. **QUESTIONS:** Who should I contact if I have questions about any of the above?

REGISTERING TO VOTE

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

You may register to vote in Massachusetts if you are:

- A citizen of the United States
- A resident of the State of Massachusetts
- At least 16 years of age (but you must be at least 18 years old on Election Day to vote)
- Not under guardianship, currently incarcerated for a felony conviction, or disqualified by law because of corrupt practices in respect to elections.¹

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?

¹ MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 51, § 1.

Members of a political party (Republican, Democrat, or Libertarian) may vote only in their own party's primary elections. Unenrolled voters (commonly referred to as "Independents") including members of [political designations](#), e.g. Green Party, may vote in the party primary of their choice. Choosing to vote in a particular party's primary does NOT enroll the voter as a member of that party. For information about Primary, see the [state website](#).

Voters may change their enrollment status [online](#), by submitting a new voter registration, or by notifying their local election official (Town Clerk) in writing at least 10 days before the election.

When going to vote, the voters shall state their name and, if requested, their residence to the ballot clerk. The ballot clerk will announce the name of the party the voter is enrolled in if this information is shown on the voting list. If this information is not on the voting list, the ballot clerk will ask the voter in which political party's primary she wishes to vote and record the voter's answer on the voting list.²

3. **STATUS:** [Am I registered to vote?](#)

Voters can determine whether they are registered to vote by checking the Massachusetts Secretary of State [website](#) or by calling 1-866-462-VOTE (8683).

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

Massachusetts residents may register online, in-person, or by mail.

Online:

To register to vote online, a voter must have a signature on file with the Registry of Motor Vehicles. If a voter currently has a Massachusetts driver's license or state ID card, the voter may use the online voter registration application to register, update their address, or change their party affiliation.

Registering by Mail:

If a voter does not qualify to register to vote online, or if they would prefer to register by mail, the voter may download the voter registration form from the website of the Secretary of the Commonwealth. Forms are available in [English](#), [Spanish](#), [Chinese](#), [Khmer](#), [Cape Verdean](#), [Haitian Creole](#), [Portuguese](#), [Russian](#), and [Vietnamese](#) languages. The voter may also request a form by contacting the Elections and Voting Division in the Secretary of the Commonwealth's Office (1-800-462-8683), or their [local election official's office](#). Forms might also be obtained from public libraries. The registration form must be completed, signed, and delivered to the voter's local election official's office.

Registering In-person:

A voter may complete the registration form in-person at a [local election office](#), the [Elections Division of the Secretary of the Commonwealth](#), the Secretary of the Commonwealth's regional offices, an office of the Registry of Motor Vehicles, and at certain public assistance agencies.

Automatic Voter Registration:

Anyone eligible to vote will be automatically registered when applying for or renewing a driver's license or state ID at the Registry of Motor Vehicles or applying for health insurance through MassHealth or the Commonwealth Health Connector. State law no longer allows a voter to opt out of registering during

² MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 53, § 37.

these transactions, instead, the voter will be sent a notice by mail to inform them of their automatic registration and explain how to remove their name from the voter list.

5. **IDENTIFICATION:** [What ID is required to register to vote?](#)

A voter must have a Massachusetts driver's license or state ID card to use the online voter registration site to register, update their address, or change their party affiliation. When registering by mail, a voter is required to provide either their driver's license (not non-drivers state ID) number or the last four digits of their social security number. If the voter does not provide this information, or if the voter does provide the information and it cannot be verified, the voter will be required to provide identification at the polling place that includes both the voter's **name and the address** at which the voter is registered to vote. It is recommended that mail registrants include a copy of their identification with their application. See [Question 19](#) for examples of acceptable identification.

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 voter registration deadline is ten days before election day: October 26, 2024, for the November 5, 2024 general election. Voter registration forms submitted online must be submitted by 11:59 p.m., and forms submitted in person must be received in the [local election office](#) by 5:00 p.m. Forms submitted by mail must be **postmarked** by this deadline.³

Certain voters may vote an Absentee Ballot without first being registered (see [Question 49](#)). This rule applies to:

- Military and overseas voters. See [Question 11](#).
- Voters currently incarcerated for something other than a felony conviction. See [Question 13](#).
- Voters requesting an emergency absentee ballot due to hospitalization. See [Question 52](#).
- A Massachusetts citizen absent from the state.

A citizen who was naturalized after the last day to register to vote, may register to vote in person at their [local election office](#) until 4 p.m. on the day before the election. They must bring documentation to show that their naturalization ceremony occurred after the voter registration deadline.

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

Massachusetts does not have Same Day Registration.

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

Voters must update their voter registration every time they move. Voters should update their address by submitting a new voter registration form prior to the registration deadline. If a voter misses the deadline, the voter may vote at their old polling location for state and national (not local) elections, for up to 6 months after they move so long as they have not registered elsewhere. But, if the move was more than 6 months prior to the election, they may not vote.

9. **TEMPORARY MOVE:** [I have moved temporarily. How can I vote?](#)

³ MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 51, § 26.

A voter who has moved temporarily must vote at their permanent address. They may vote at an early voting location or the election day polling place for their permanent address, or by absentee (not mail-in) ballot.

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?](#)

Yes, college students who meet the registration requirements may register to vote either where they go to school or at their home address. It is sufficient to establish residency by moving to a school in Massachusetts with the present intent to make that residence their principal home without the intent to return to the student's former home after graduation. All colleges must make available voter registration forms at all locations where students register for classes.

11. **LIVING ABROAD:** [I am living abroad and/or serving in the military. How can I register and/or vote?](#)

The [Federal Voter Assistance Program](#) and Massachusetts law establish [special procedures](#) to facilitate voting by citizens residing outside the U.S., and members of the U.S. Armed Forces and Merchant Marine, (including the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service and NOAA), along with their family members, who are stationed away from their Massachusetts voting residence.

Voting Residence

For overseas voters, their voting residence is their last residence in the U.S., and if they never lived in the U.S., their parent's last U.S. address. Members of the military stationed in Massachusetts can register to vote in Massachusetts. If military members lived in Massachusetts before being called to active duty and haven't registered elsewhere, they can vote by absentee ballot in Massachusetts elections.

Registration and Requesting an Absentee Ballot

Military and overseas voters do not have to be registered to receive an absentee ballot. They can apply for a ballot using the [Federal Post Card Application](#) (FPCA), the [Massachusetts Absentee Ballot Application](#) (NOT the Mail Ballot Application which is different), or by sending a written request for an absentee ballot to their local election office. The deadline for requesting a ballot is the same as any other absentee voter. The request must be **received** by 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday October 29, 2024 for the general election. The application may be emailed or scanned and faxed. Absentee ballot applications are valid until December 31 of the year they are submitted. Voters need to submit a new absentee ballot application every year in which they want to vote. Voters who have missed the deadline may be able to use the Federal Write-in Ballot, even if they did not apply for an absentee ballot.

Receiving an Absentee Ballot

Military or overseas voters may receive their blank absentee ballots by mail, fax, or an online portal. The [Federal Post Card Application](#) has a box for voters to check how they wish to receive their ballot.

Ballot Return

Voters can also choose to return their ballot by email/online, fax, or mail. [Ballot deadlines](#) are different depending on the type of election and how the ballot is returned. For the Primary, the ballot must be received by the close of polls on election day. For the General Election, ballots returned electronically must be received by the close of polls on election day. Mailed ballots must be postmarked by election day and received within three days (November 8) if mailed within the U.S. and within ten days (November 15) if mailed from outside the U.S.

Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot

The [Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot](#) is a back-up ballot that can be used by registered military or overseas voters. It is a blank ballot, which voters may use to vote for any candidate or ballot question. If the voter does not receive their regular ballot in time, they may use the FWAB. It may also be used even if the voter has not applied for a ballot. It may be submitted by mail, email, or fax, and must be received by the voter's local voting officials in Massachusetts no later than noon on Election Day.

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?](#)

Check the resources at Campaign Legal [Restore Your Vote](#) for latest information.

Voting rights of felons are automatically restored upon release from custody. People on parole or probation, even for a felony, can vote. A person previously incarcerated for a felony must re-register after they have completed their sentence before they can vote.

13. INCARCERATED: [I am currently incarcerated. Can I register to vote? Can I vote from jail?](#)

Check the resources at Campaign Legal [Restore Your Vote](#) for latest information.

A person who is incarcerated for a felony may not vote. Individuals incarcerated for other reasons, including people civilly committed, serving a misdemeanor sentence, and being detained pre-trial may vote by mail ballot. If a voter is incarcerated, they do not need to register to vote. Instead, the voter can vote by absentee (not mail) ballot as a "specially qualified voter."⁴

14. REGISTRATION CHALLENGED: [My registration has been challenged, what should I do?](#)

If you believe you're registered to vote but your name isn't on the list at your polling location, check to [make sure that you're at the right polling location](#). If you are, ask the poll worker to contact your local election office to confirm that you're registered to vote. If that doesn't work, voters have the right to cast a provisional ballot if they believe they are a qualified registered voter but their name doesn't appear on the active voter list.

If an election official or other person has officially challenged a right to vote for legal cause, the voter can cast a challenged (escrow) ballot. The voter takes an oath, and the ballot is placed in the "escrow ballots" envelope. Challenged votes have the option to go to the registrars' office and to vote there under the certificate procedure if determined to be entitled to vote.⁵

Voters also have the right to follow up any challenge to their right to vote through the complaint process. If a person believes their right to vote has been violated in any way, they may call the Secretary of the Commonwealth's Elections Division at 1-800-462-VOTE (8683).

HOW TO VOTE: ELECTION DAY

⁴ MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 54, § 91A.

⁵ 950 CMR 54.04(23)

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

Polling places may open as early as 5:45 a.m. depending on the locality, but are required to be open by 7:00 a.m. Voters should check with their [local election officials](#) to confirm the opening time of the polls. Polls must remain open until 8:00 p.m.⁶ Voters in line at their polling place when the polls close at 8:00 p.m. must be allowed to vote. Hours for local town elections may vary.

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

Voters may determine their polling location [here](#). Voters may also contact their [local election officials](#) or the Elections Division at 1-800-462-VOTE (8683) for help finding their polling place.

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

Employees in certain industries, including manufacturing, mechanical, or mercantile establishments, must be given time to vote within the first 2 hours that the polls are open. Employees must request the time in advance. It does not have to be paid.⁷

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

Voters in line at their polling place when the polls close at 8:00 p.m. have the right to vote and must be given at least five minutes to vote.

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

In Massachusetts, there is no generally applicable requirement for voters to show ID at their polling place. However, election officials may ask a voter to show an ID that includes the voter's **name and the address** at which the voter is registered when they check-in at the polling place if:

- They are voting for the first time in Massachusetts and did not provide sufficient ID when registering by mail (see [Question 5](#));
- The voter has been placed on the inactive voters list;
- The voter is casting a provisional or challenged ballot; or
- The poll worker has a practical and legal reason that leads them to request identification.

Acceptable identification for first-time voters in a **Federal Election** includes:

- Current and valid photo identification, such as a driver's license or state ID;
- Current utility bill;
- Bank statement;
- Government check;
- Paycheck; or
- Other government document.⁸

For the other reasons listed above for which ID may be required, acceptable ID **also** includes, but is not limited to:

- Rent receipt or lease;

⁶ MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 54, § 64.

⁷ MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 149, § 178.

⁸ MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 54, § 76B(b)(2).

- Voter registration affidavit;
- Letter from a school dormitory or housing office;
- Any other printed identification which contains the voter's name and address.

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

Yes, under most circumstances voters can vote without providing identification. Identification is only required in the limited situations listed above (see [Question 19](#)).

If a first-time voter is unable to provide appropriate identification, they may cast a provisional ballot and return to the polling place later with identification. If the voter does not return with acceptable identification by the **close of polls**, their ballot will not be counted.

If a voter is not able to present identification in any of the other above-listed situations, the voter may cast a challenged ballot. This means that the voter's name and address, the name and address of the challenger, and the reason for the challenge must be written on the ballot. The ballot will be cast normally and will only be re-examined in the case of a recount, court order, or audit.

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?

If a voter is not found on the rolls of the polling place where the voter is attempting to vote—and the voter's name is not on the inactive voter list, the poll workers should make sure that the voter is: (1) registered to vote by using the [online registration look-up](#); and (2) at the correct polling place by using the [online poll locator](#). The voter can also ask the poll worker to call the local election office to confirm the voter's registration and polling place.

If the voter has moved recently, they might still be registered to vote at their old address. The local election office will be able to check if they are registered in another city or town. Typically, a voter can vote at their old polling location for up to six months after they move. However, this exception does not apply to local elections or if the voter has already registered elsewhere.

If the voter's registration and/or polling place is unable to be verified, the voter may still cast a provisional ballot and may be asked to provide acceptable ID. Voters may only vote at the polling place corresponding to their address. Provisional ballots cast at the wrong polling location will **not** be counted.

Massachusetts has an **inactive voters list** that is composed of registered voters who failed to respond to a communication from their municipality regarding its annual census of residents, also known as the annual street list. Residents who fail to respond to the annual street list will be placed on the inactive voters list and will receive a message from their municipality asking that they confirm that they still reside at the address at which they are registered. Residents who fail to respond to the request for confirmation of their place of residence will remain on the inactive voters list. These residents may vote, but they will be asked to confirm that they reside at the address at which they are registered and will also be asked to produce identification. See [Questions 19](#) and [20](#). Residents on the inactive voters list who fail to vote in two consecutive federal elections will be removed from the voting list.⁹

⁹ MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 51, §§ 37, 37A.

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

Reasons a voter may vote provisionally include:

- The voter's name is not on the voter list;
- The voter's information on list is incorrect; or
- The voter cannot provide identification at check in and it is the voter's first time voting in Massachusetts.

First time voters who cannot provide identification may vote by provisional ballot but must return to the **polling place** with identification before the polls close. In other cases, local election offices must resolve all provisional ballots within three days of the election. If the local election office finds the voter to be eligible to vote, the ballot will be counted. Voters can call the Elections Division at 1-800-462-VOTE (8683) after the election to see if their ballot has been counted.

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

Yes, a voter who does not have appropriate ID when requested or whose name is not on the rolls at their polling place may have an opportunity to vote by provisional ballot.¹⁰ Voters who are not on the list where they believe they are registered to vote, or find that they are listed incorrectly, have the right to cast a provisional ballot. However, voting by provisional ballot should be a last resort.

A voter who believes that they are registered but who is not on the voter registration roll should make sure that they are in the correct polling place, and if they are in a polling place with more than one precinct, that they are in the correct line. Voters can confirm their polling place [here](#) or with their [local election official](#).

If the voter is at the correct precinct for their address and their name is not on the list, they should ask a poll worker to contact a local election official to see if they can confirm the voter's registration. The local election official should also check to see if the voter is registered at a different address. A voter may also check their registration information [here](#).

If a voter is unable to provide acceptable identification (see [Question 19](#)) when they go to vote, they may cast a provisional ballot. The provisional ballot will be counted if they return with identification to the polling place **by close of polls**. If they do not return with identification by the time polls are closed, their provisional ballot cannot be counted.

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

Voters given provisional ballots because they did not have necessary identification must bring that ID to the polling place before the close of the polls. Local election offices must resolve all other provisional ballots within three days of the elections. The voter should provide any information or evidence they have about their registration to the office before this period ends. If the voter's local election office finds that the voter is an eligible voter, the voter's ballot will be counted. The voter can call the Elections Division at 1-800-462-VOTE (8683) after Election Day to see if the voter's ballot has been counted.

¹⁰ MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 54, § 76C.

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 in person absentee voting)?

Yes, in all statewide elections there are two ways to vote early in Massachusetts: in person or by mail.¹¹ But, for local elections, municipalities can opt out of both early voting and vote-by-mail. For information about local elections, voters can consult their [local election office](#).

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

No, a voter does not need a reason to vote early in Massachusetts.¹²

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

The early voting period for the November 5 general election is from October 19 to November 1. Each city and town chooses their own in-person early voting locations and sets their own schedule for voting during the early voting period. All cities and towns are required to offer weekend early voting hours, but early voting may not be available on every day of the early voting period. A voter should check with their city or town to determine when and where in-person early voting is available. This information will be available on the state [website](#) no later than 7 days before the election.

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

Each city and town must have at least one early voting site. A voter should check with their city or town to determine when and where in-person early voting is available. Information on the in-person early voting locations and schedules. This information will be available on the state [website](#) no later than 7 days before the election.¹³

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

See [Questions 19 & 20](#).

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

See [Questions 76-81](#).

¹¹ MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 54, § 25B.

¹² MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 54, § 25B(a).

¹³ 950 MASS. CODE REGS. 47.04(2)(a) (2020).

HOW TO VOTE: VOTE BY MAIL

(in this state defined as: Early Voting By Mail)

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

No, a voter will not automatically be sent a mail-in ballot. However, for certain elections, including all regular and primary elections where a federal office is on the ballot, the Secretary of State will mail all persons who are registered to vote not less than 60 days before the election, an application for an early voting ballot.¹⁴ The application will allow the voter to apply for an early voting ballot for all eligible remaining elections in the calendar year.

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

A voter does not need a reason to vote by mail in Massachusetts.

Note: The Mail Ballot Application is only for those who want the ballot mailed to their registered address. Voters who need the ballot mailed to a different address must use the Absentee Ballot Application, see [Question 49](#).¹⁵

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

The local election office must **receive** the Application by 5:00 p.m. no later than 5 business days prior to the election: Tuesday October 29, 2024 for the November 5 general election. However, because of potential mail delays, the Secretary of the Commonwealth recommends that voters apply for their mail-in ballot 2-3 weeks before election day to ensure that there is enough time to receive, complete, and return the ballot in time for it to be counted.

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

Yes. Voters can receive assistance in completing the Application. The person assisting the voter must include their name and address on the application.

Voters with disabilities may also complete an [Accessible Vote by Mail Application](#). They are available for voters who are blind or have a vision impairment, have a mobility or dexterity disability, or have another disability that makes it difficult for them to mark a paper ballot. Voters who have requested an Accessible Ballot will receive instructions on how to use a system that will allow them to mark and submit their ballot electronically (or to print out and submit a paper ballot). See [Voters with Disabilities](#). Accessible Vote by Mail applications also allow the voter to receive assistance and to use a type-written signature if they are not able to independently sign the application by hand.

¹⁴ MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 54, § 25B(7)(i).

¹⁵ MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 54, § 25B(a).

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?

Vote by Mail applications can be submitted online, or by mail, email, or fax. Applications submitted by mail, email, or fax must include a signature. Typed signatures are not accepted unless the voter requires accommodations due to physical disability (see [Question 34](#)).¹⁶

Online: Registered voters may submit their Vote by Mail application online through the [Mail In Ballot Application System](#).

Mail: Registered voters will receive a Vote by Mail application in the mail. These applications are pre-addressed to your local election office with prepaid postage. A voter may apply to Vote by Mail by completing the application and returning it to their local election office. The Vote by Mail application can also be [downloaded](#) or obtained by calling the voter's [local election office](#).

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

Yes, in some cases. If ID would be required for voting in person, see [Question 19](#), the voter may be required to submit ID with their ballot.¹⁷ If the voter registered by mail and did not provide ID when they did so, they should send a copy of appropriate ID with their 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?

The Mail Ballot Application is only for those who want the ballot mailed to their registered address. Voters who need the ballot mailed elsewhere must use the Absentee Ballot Application (see [Question 49](#)). Unlike the Vote by Mail process, voters must have a qualifying reason to vote absentee.

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

Voters who have missed the deadline may vote in person early or on election day. A voter who has been admitted to a healthcare facility after the deadline may use the absentee ballot application to designate someone of their choice to obtain a ballot on their behalf (see [Question 52](#)).

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

Voters may check the status of their mail-in ballot application and ballot [here](#).

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?

¹⁶ MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 54, § 25B(a)(2).

¹⁷ MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 54, § 76B(a).

If a voter learns that their ballot application or ballot has been rejected, they should reach out to their [local election office](#) for guidance on how to fix any errors. If a voter is notified that the affidavit on the envelope containing their mail-in ballot has been improperly executed or is incomplete, they should also be provided with an opportunity to correct any errors.

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

Voters should carefully read the instructions enclosed in the vote by mail package. In addition to the instructions, the package will include a ballot, a smaller ballot envelope, and a larger return envelope.

Voters should mark the ballot, preferably with black ink, in accordance with the instructions on the ballot. Candidates and questions may be listed on both sides of the page. A voter who needs assistance in completing the ballot because of a disability or an inability to read the ballot may choose any person to help.

Once the voter has completed filling out their ballot, they should place it in the smaller ballot envelope and seal the envelope. The voter will then need to sign the ballot envelope and print their name and address below their signature if that information has not been preprinted on the envelope. If the voter cannot sign their name, they will need to choose someone to sign their name on the ballot envelope for them. That person will need to sign their own name on the bottom half of the envelope. Once the ballot envelope has been properly completed and signed, it should be placed in the white envelope and that envelope should be sealed.

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

Voters who have requested an Accessible Ballot will receive instructions on how to use a system that will allow them to mark and submit their ballot electronically or to print out the ballot electronically. See [Voters with Disabilities](#).

A voter who is unable to mark their ballot or execute the affidavit on the envelope due to blindness, physical disability, inability to read, or inability to read English, may obtain assistance from a person of their choice. The person providing the assistance must add their name in the appropriate space on the affidavit envelope.¹⁸

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?

Voters may:

- Mail their ballot using the envelope provided;
- Hand-deliver their ballot to [their local election office](#);
- Drop off the ballot at an early voting location during early voting hours; or
- Use a ballot drop box provided by their city or town.¹⁹

Mail-in ballots may not be returned to the polling place on election day, but voters may use the in-person option to vote at their polling place. See [Question 48](#).

¹⁸ 950 Mass. Reg. 47.10(3).

¹⁹ MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 54, § 25B(a)(13).

For the November 5 general election, mailed ballots must be postmarked by Election Day and reach the local election office by 5 p.m. on November 8 (if returned by domestic mail) or 5 p.m. on November 15, 2024 (if returned by mail from outside the U.S.). For primary elections they must be received by election day.

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

Voters may drop off a mail-in ballot at an early voting location during early voting hours or use a [ballot drop box](#) provided by their city or town.

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

Yes. Mail ballots may be returned by the voter or by a family member. A “family member” is “a spouse or person residing in the same household, in-laws, father, mother, sister or brother of the whole or half blood, son, daughter, adopting parent or adopted child, stepparent or stepchild, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, grandparent or grandchild.”²⁰

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?

A voter who spoils their early voting ballot may obtain up to two replacements, provided that the voter includes the spoiled ballot with the request for a replacement ballot and the request is received by the local election official by the deadline for requesting a mail ballot, 5 days before the election (see [Question 33](#)).²¹

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 does not receive a requested mail-in ballot should contact their [local election office about their options](#). These voters may be able to receive a replacement mail-in ballot. They can also vote early in person or in person on Election Day.

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

A voter who requested a mail ballot may vote in person either at an early voting location or at the polls on Election Day so long as the voter’s ballot has not been accepted by the voter’s local election office.

HOW TO VOTE: ABSENTEE

(in this state defined as: excuse-required voting by mail)

²⁰ Chap. 50, § 1.

²¹ MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 54, Secs. 25B(a)(12), 81.

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

There are special circumstances where someone may need to use the [Absentee Ballot application](#) to apply for an absentee ballot instead, including:

- A voter is qualified to receive an absentee ballot and is voting in a local election in a city or town that has opted out of Vote by Mail for that election.
- A voter will be away from their city or town on Election Day, and needs the ballot sent to a location other than their home.
- A voter is a military or overseas voter. See [Question 11](#).
- A voter is currently incarcerated for something other than a felony conviction. See [Question 13](#).
- A voter is requesting an emergency absentee ballot due to hospitalization. See [Question 52](#).
- A Massachusetts citizen absent from the state.

In most elections, voters can choose whether they would prefer to vote in person or by mail. Absentee voters use the same ballots as Vote by Mail voters and generally have the same procedures and deadlines. Most voters who qualify for an absentee ballot can choose instead to apply for an early Vote by Mail ballot.

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

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?

A voter who has been admitted to a healthcare facility within one week of the election may use the absentee ballot application to designate someone of their choice to obtain a ballot on their behalf. The person designated will need to bring a signed [absentee ballot application](#)²² to the voter's local election office, pick up the absentee ballot, bring it to the voter, and return it by the close of polls on Election Day. Emergency ballots may be requested until the polls close.

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

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?

See [Question 39](#).

²² Absentee Ballot Applications are available in [Chinese](#), [English](#), [Khmer](#), [Spanish](#), and [Vietnamese](#)

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?

A voter may submit their application for an absentee ballot in person at their [local election office](#) and request that their ballot be delivered at the office.²³ If the ballot is delivered in person at the local election office, then the voter must vote the ballot and return it to the clerk before leaving the office.²⁴

²³ MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 54, § 91B(a).

²⁴ MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 54, § 92(a).

POLLING PLACE ISSUES

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

If a voter arrives at a polling place at a time that they believe it should be open and it is not open (all polling places must be open between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., and some may open as early as 5:45 a.m. on Election Day), the voter should confirm that they are at the correct location (either through the Secretary of the Commonwealth's [website](#) or by contacting their [local election office](#)). They should also check for other entrances to the building. If they are at the correct location, and the polling place should be open, the voter should report the matter to their local election officials. They should also report to local election officials if there is inadequate signage directing voters to the polling place/voting area.

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?

If a voter encounters long lines at the polling place, they should try to determine if there are delays caused by equipment failure, personnel shortages, inadequate training, or by the number of people trying to vote. Particularly if the delays are caused by equipment or personnel problems, the voter may contact the Election Protection Hotline, their [local election official](#), or the Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth at 1-800-462-VOTE (8683).

If the polls close while the voter is in line, the voter must be permitted to vote. Election officials must give them at least 5 minutes to complete their ballot.

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

Voters should notify the election officers if the voting equipment breaks down while the polls are open.

If the problem is with the scanner, it is generally standard procedure to store the voted ballots in a container to be scanned later. The voter should be assured that the ballot will be counted.

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

Voters have the right to wait to vote (and to vote) without anyone electioneering or trying to influence their vote in any other way within 150 feet from the building entrance door to a polling place.²⁵

Posters, cards, stickers, handbills, placards, pictures, or circulars intended to influence the voter are not allowed to be posted, circulated, or exhibited in the polling place or within 150 feet of the building's entrance.²⁶ No one is allowed to collect signatures for petitions or referendums, solicit votes, or influence voters within 150 feet of the building's entrance.²⁷

²⁵ MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 54, § 65.

²⁶ MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 54, § 65.

²⁷ [Election Advisory #20-12.](#)

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

Voters cannot wear clothing, buttons, or hats with identifying political signs or symbols. Voters are allowed to bring materials that will assist them in their vote, even if this material would otherwise be prohibited in the polling place.²⁸

Voters cannot take photos of their ballots.²⁹ Voters may take photos inside as long as they do not capture a voter's ballot. Photos are not allowed if it is deemed to be intimidating to voters.

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

Poll workers cannot wear clothing, buttons, or hats with identifying political signs or symbols.³⁰ Poll workers are not allowed to influence voters, and they must allow voters to stay in the booth for at least 5 minutes. Poll workers are allowed to ask for identification if they have a legal, practical reason. Please report any conduct by poll workers that seems intimidating or discriminatory or otherwise improper.

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?

Voters should notify the presiding officer of their precinct if they feel unsafe or uncomfortable outside the polling place as this is the official responsible for enforcing the 150-foot rule.³¹ For any questions or to report a complaint, contact the Elections Division via email at elections@sec.state.ma.us or by phone at 617-727-2828. Voters should also contact the Election Protection Hotline, 1-866-OUR-VOTE (687-8683), to report these issues.

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

When your ballot is challenged, your name and address, the name and address of the challenger, and the reason for the challenge must be written on your ballot. Your ballot will be cast normally and will only be re-examined in the case of a recount, court order, or audit.

Election officers and certain people designated as observer-challengers may challenge any person's right to vote for any legal cause. But it is illegal to use the challenge process for improper purposes, including intimidating a voter. Voters also have the right to follow up any challenge to their right to vote through the complaint process. If a person believes their right to vote has been violated in any way, they may call the Secretary of the Commonwealth's Elections Division at 1-800-462-VOTE (8683)

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

²⁸ [Election Advisory #20-12.](#)

²⁹ Mass. Gen. Laws ch. 56, § 25.

³⁰ [Election Advisory #20-12.](#)

³¹ *Regarding Electioneering, the 150-foot Rule, and Maintaining Order in the Polling Place*, ELECTION ADVISORY #20-12, WILLIAM FRANCIS GALVIN, SECRETARY OF STATE (Oct. 30, 2020).

Interfering with elections or intimidating voters at polling locations is illegal. Massachusetts state law prohibits intimidation of voters and interference with elections officers by anyone, including law enforcement officers and private citizens. However, Massachusetts law does require local police officers to be stationed at polling places to assist local election officials.³² Police officers are generally barred from entering the immediate voting area, unless requested to assist the chief election official at the polling place.

Federal law specifically bans the military or other armed federal officers from being present at polling places.

A voter who feels intimidated at their polling place or who believes that their right to vote has been violated in any way, should call 1-866-OUR-VOTE (687-8683) or the Election Protection Command Center (1-866-747-1471). The voter can also contact the poll workers and their [local election office](#).

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

A voter who believes that they are registered but who is not on the voter registration roll should make sure that they are registered and in the correct polling place. If the polling place has more than one precinct, verify that they are in the correct line.

If the voter is at the correct precinct for their address and their name is not on the list, they should ask a poll worker to contact a local election official to see if they can confirm the voter's registration.

If the voter's registration status cannot be confirmed, they may vote using a provisional ballot. If the voter chooses to vote a provisional ballot, they will be asked to complete a provisional ballot affirmation upon which they may provide information about where and when they registered. The voter may also be asked to provide identification.

(See [Question 21](#) for more details).

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

See info in the [How to Vote: Election Day](#) Section.

The voter should determine why they were offered a provisional ballot. It should be either because:

- The voter's registration status cannot be verified at the polling place; or
- The voter is required to provide an acceptable ID but is unable to do so.³³

See [Question 21](#) for voters who believe that they are registered but who are not on the voter registration roll.

See [Question 20](#) for voters who did not provide ID.

³² MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 54, § 72.

³³ MASS. GEN. LAWS ch 54, § 76C.

ACCESSIBILITY/ASSISTANCE

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

Yes, an election officer may answer questions and instruct the voter on proper use of the voting equipment by using the demonstration model provided outside the voting booth.³⁴

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?

Yes, Massachusetts law requires that each polling place be accessible to voters with physical disabilities.

There should be at least one accessible marking unit in every polling place in Massachusetts. The AutoMARK Voter Assist Terminals are marking devices that use audio cue capacity for visually impaired voters. The AutoMark also has a feature that will greatly magnify the ballot or display a high-contrast version of the ballot for voters that have limited visual impairment. The AutoMark can also produce an oral report to the voter as the choices selected prior to the voter printing the ballot. Additional information on the AutoMARK system may be found in the [video](#).

A voter can choose someone to assist them with entering the polling location, checking in, entering the voting booth, preparing the ballot, exiting the voting booth, and checking out. Voters with physical disabilities can also vote by absentee ballot, either by mail or in the office of the city or town clerk or election commission. However, current Massachusetts law does not allow for "curbside voting" outside of the polling place on Election Day.

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, a voter who states to the presiding officer that they are unable to prepare their ballot or register their vote upon a voting machine due to blindness, other physical disability, inability to read, or inability to read in the English language can be assisted by any person the voter designates. Alternatively, a voter can request that two election officers, each of a different political party, accompany them into the voting booth to assist them in casting a ballot. In addition, the state secretary must provide forms in additional languages as it deems necessary or as required by law.

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 voter who states to the presiding officer that they are unable to prepare their ballot or register their vote upon a voting machine due to blindness, other physical disability, inability to read, or inability to read in the English language can be assisted by any person the voter designates. Alternatively, a voter can request that two election officers, each of a different political party, accompany them into the voting booth to assist them in casting a ballot. In addition, the state secretary must provide forms in additional languages as it deems necessary or as required by law.

³⁴ 950 MASS. CODE REGS. § 54.04(9)(a).

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

Massachusetts law does not allow for “curbside voting” outside of the polling place on Election Day.

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

Yes, a voter may bring a voting guide or reference notes into the voting booth, even if those materials would be otherwise prohibited under the 150-foot rule. See [Question 69](#).

STATE SPECIFIC SUPPLEMENT

82. CHILDREN: Can I bring my children into the voting booth with me?

Yes, voters are allowed to bring their children into the voting booth.

83. ELECTION AUTHORITIES: What entities are responsible for Massachusetts elections?

In Massachusetts, besides the Secretary of the Commonwealth, it is the Towns and Cities (not Counties) that are responsible for running the elections. The town or city that a voter resides in is not necessarily the same as their mailing address.

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

Contact the Election Protection Hotline toll-free at 1-866-OUR-VOTE (867-8683).

Contact the Secretary of the Commonwealth, Elections Division as follows:

Toll-Free: 1-800-462-VOTE (8683)

617-727-2828

Fax: 617-742-3238

Email: elections@sec.state.ma.us

<https://www.sec.state.ma.us/ele/eleidx.htm>

For deaf, hard of hearing, or speech-impaired at TTY: 617-878-3889.

Voters can also contact their [local election official](#).