Frequently Asked Questions

Mississippi – General Election 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.

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

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VOTER REGISTRATION

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

Every United States citizen has the right to vote in federal, state, and local elections as long as they are:

1. A resident of Mississippi and the county, city, or town for 30 days prior to the election;
2. 18 years of age or older (or will be 18 by the date of the next General election);

3. Not declared mentally incompetent by a court; and,
4. Not convicted in a Mississippi court of arson, armed robbery, bigamy, bribery, carjacking, embezzlement, extortion, felony bad check, felony shoplifting, forgery, larceny, murder, obtaining money or goods under false pretense, perjury, rape, receiving stolen property, robbery, statutory rape, theft, timber larceny, larceny under lease or rental agreement, or unlawful taking of motor vehicle (unless having been pardoned, had rights of citizenship restored by the Governor or had suffrage restored by the Legislature.)[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?

Mississippi has an "open" primary system, which means that any registered voter can vote in any primary election without registering with a political party.

A person cannot, however, vote in the primary election of one party and then "cross-over" to vote in the primary election of another party.[2]

Poll workers may ask voters which party they support so that the voter will receive the correct ballot. Because voters can only vote in one primary, they must choose which party's primary they wish to vote in.

Voters who have not yet reached the age of 18 at the time of a primary election may vote in the primary election so long as the voter will reach the age of 18 on or before the date of the general election.[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 to vote by filling out this form on the Secretary of State's Website. The form requires the voter's first name, last name, date of birth, and county of residence and the last four digits of the voter's social security number.

Name Change: If a voter has changed their name since they registered to vote, they may fill out this form and mail it to their local County Circuit Clerk.[4] The addresses for all County Circuit Clerks are listed on the second page of the form. The form requires the voter's name, address, date of birth, phone number, email, Mississippi driver's license number or last four digits of their social security number, and the information used for the previous registration.

[1] Miss. Sec'y of State, Mississippi Voter Information Guide, https://www.sos.ms.gov/sites/default/files/elections/2026%20Mississippi%20Voter%20Information%20Guide.pdf at 2; Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-11.
[2] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-575.
[3] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-11.
[4] https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/Mail-in%20Voter%20Registration%20Application.pdf.

Inactive: Voters who are listed as "inactive" can vote only by affidavit ballot. The affidavit ballot will be counted if the voter affirms they live at the same address or an address in the same precinct.[5]

The county election commissioners place registered voters on inactive status if the registered voter has been sent a confirmation notice to confirm their current address.[6] The election commissioners send a confirmation notice to registered voters when:

- They have moved to a different residence, per USPS change-of-address information;
- A county election commissioner or county registrar has received notice from another state that the registered voter has registered to vote in another state;
- The registered voter has failed to vote at least once in any election or update their registration from the year a presidential primary is held to the year the general election for President is held (if not the same year); or
- The registrar or election commissioners receive reliable information that the registered voter has moved out of state. Reliable information includes official mail returned as undeliverable; registered voter files an application for homestead exemption at an address other than their official address; or any other information from another state or county indicating the registered voter no longer resides at the listed address.[7]

A voter in inactive status may return to active status by voting in an election in the voter's county or city of registration, casting an affidavit ballot, updating their address, and still living in the county in which they were originally registered to vote. If the voter casts an affidavit ballot and their residence is not in the county, they will be removed from the voter rolls and need to re-register in the correct county.[8] A voter in inactive status is purged from the voter roll if they do not vote in the two federal elections immediately following the sending of a confirmation notice.[9]

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

By Mail: Voters can register to vote by filling out the Mississippi Mail In Voter Registration Application and sending the completed form to your County Circuit Clerk's office.[10] Mail-in voter registration forms are also available at the circuit clerk's offices, municipal clerk's offices, public libraries, and other participating government offices[11] Mail-in voter registration applications

[5] Miss. Sec'y of State, 2026 County Elections Handbook, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/2026%20County%20Election%20Handbook.revised%2012-30-2025.pdf at 7.
[6] *See* Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-152(1) (definition of confirmation notice); Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-152(3).
[7] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-152(2).
[8] Miss. Sec'y of State, 2026 County Elections Handbook, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/2026%20County%20Election%20Handbook.revised%2012-30-2025.pdf at 7.
[9] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-152(5).
[10] Miss. Sec'y of State, Mississippi Voter Information Guide, https://www.sos.ms.gov/sites/default/files/elections/2026%20Mississippi%20Voter%20Information%20Guide.pdf at 2.
[11] *Id*.

must be postmarked 30 days before the election. **For the November 3, 2026 general election, the deadline is October 5, 2026**.[12]

In Person: If a voter does not have access to a computer and/or printer, voter registration is available in person at the County Circuit Clerk's office, the Municipal Clerk's office, or at the Mississippi Department of Public Safety.[13] Registration is also available in person at any state or federal agency offering government services, such as the Department of Human Services. [14]

Online registration is not currently available.[15]

Registration must be accomplished at least 30 days prior to the first election in which a citizen wishes to vote.[16] If the 30th day before the election falls on a Sunday or legal holiday, the deadline is extended to the next business day.[17] **For the November 3, 2026 general election, the deadline is October 5, 2026.**[18]

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

A Mississippi Driver's License and/or the last 4 Digits of the voter's Social Security Number are required to register to vote.[19]

Those registering for the first time in Mississippi who DO NOT have a Mississippi driver's license or social security number: must send the Mississippi Mail-In Voter Registration Application along with a copy of a current and valid photo ID or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck or other government document that shows the voter's name and address in this county.[20]

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[12] Miss. Sec'y of State, *Mississippi Voter Information Guide* at 2, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/yallvotedocs/2026%20Mississippi%20Voter%20Information%20Guide.pdf.

[13] *Id.*

[14] *Id.* ; *see also* Miss. Code Ann. §§ 23-15-33 — 23-15-47 (registration pursuant to the National Voter Registration Act of 1993, 52 U.S.C. §§ 20503-20504, 20506, which provides for registration at other agencies).

[15] https://vote.gov/register/ms/.

[16] Miss. Sec'y of State, Mississippi Voter Information Guide, https://www.sos.ms.gov/sites/default/files/elections/2026%20Mississippi%20Voter%20Information%20Guide.pdf at 1.

[17] Miss. Sec'y of State, Mississippi Voter Information Guide, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/yallvotedocs/2026%20Mississippi%20Voter%20Information%20Guide.pdf.

[18] Miss. Sec'y of State, *Mississippi Voter Information Guide* at 2, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/yallvotedocs/2026%20Mississippi%20Voter%20Information%20Guide.pdf at 1.

[19] https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/yallvotedocs/2026%20Mississippi%20Voter%20Information%20Guide.pdf; https://www.sos.ms.gov/sites/default/files/elections/Mail-in%20Voter%20Registration%20Application.pdf.

[20] https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/Mail-in%20Voter%20Registration%20Application.pdf.

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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 the November 3, 2026 general election is October 5, 2026.[21] An application for voter registration must be *postmarked or hand delivered* to the Circuit Clerk's Office located in the county of your voting residence no later than 30 days before the General Election (or the first business day after the 30th day falling on a Sunday or holiday)—or, October 5, 2026.[22]

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

   No, Mississippi does not offer same day voter registration.[23]

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

   Refer to the table below. The answer to this question depends on <u>when and where</u> the voter moved.

Moved to:	Address in the same precinct	Different precinct but within the same county	Different election jurisdiction (typically county)	Different state
Within 30 days of Election Day:	The voter will be able to cast an Affidavit Ballot.[24] The polling place will be the same for the new and old address.	The voter will be able to cast an Affidavit Ballot.[25] Go to the polling place for the NEW address.	The voter cannot vote in the new county or old county by regular or Affidavit Ballot, ***unless*** it is a presidential election, in which case the voter may vote for the President and Vice President at the polling place in the old county.[26]	A voter may vote for the President and Vice President in their old state if they have satisfied the requirements to vote there or by absentee ballot in their old state if they satisfy the requirements for absentee voting there.[27]
More than 30 days before	The voter will be able to cast an Affidavit Ballot. [28] The polling place will be the	The voter will be able to cast an Affidavit Ballot.[29] Go to the polling place for the NEW address.	Can vote in the NEW precinct as long as they are a registered voter in the state of Mississippi AND	Can vote in the NEW precinct as long as they are a registered voter in Mississippi.[31] If a voter has

[21] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-47(2); *see, e.g.*, Miss. Sec'y of State, *Mississippi Voter Information Guide*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/yallvotedocs/2026%20Mississippi%20Voter%20Information%20Guide.pdf at 1.
[22] *Id*.
[23] *Id*.
[24] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-13.
[25] *Id*.
[26] *See* Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-11 (voter must reside "for thirty (30) days in the county in which he or she seeks to vote," among other requirements, in order to be eligible to vote in Mississippi); 52 U.S.C.A. § 10502(e).
[27] 52 U.S.C.A. § 10502(e).
[28] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-13.
[29] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-573(1)(b); *see also* Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-11 (eligibility requirements to be a qualified elector "in and for the county, municipality and voting precinct of their residence" include, among other requirements, residing in the state, county, and incorporated municipality for 30 days).
[31] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-11; *see also* 52 U.S.C.A. § 10502(e).

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Moved to:	Address in the same precinct	Different precinct but within the same county	Different election jurisdiction (typically county)	Different state
Election Day	same for the new and old address, go to the polling place.		have submitted a written request to transfer their registration 30 days before the date of the election.[30]	not re-registered with that address, they cannot vote, except for the President and Vice President in a Presidential Election.

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

To update your name and address registration information online, you must already be a registered voter of the State of Mississippi and have a current and valid Mississippi driver's license or photo identification card issued by the Mississippi Department of Public Safety.[32]

A voter can update their voter registration information by:

1. Enter your information exactly as it appears on your current voter registration card.
2. Choose your name out of the four possibilities listed.
3. Enter your information exactly as it appears on your driver's license or other DPS identification card.
4. Change your address or name.
5. Visit the polling place locator prior to or on Election Day to determine where you should go to cast your ballot.[33]

Voters can update their registration information using the mail in voter registration application and entering their new and old addresses.

Contact your County Circuit Clerk to see if you are entitled to vote by mail.

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, a college student may register where they attend school. If a student attends school in Mississippi and meets other eligibility requirements, they can establish residency and vote if they (1) have resided in that county and municipality for at least 30 days and (2) have a present intention to remain at the Mississippi school address .[34]

If a student is taking classes remotely, and is located outside the county and municipality, they must meet the 30-day residency requirement in order to register in the county and municipality to vote.[35]

[30] *See* Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-13.
[32] Miss. Sec'y of State, Mississippi Voter Information Guide at 2, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/yallvotedocs/2026%20Mississippi%20Voter%20Information%20Guide.pdf.
[33] *Id*.
[34] *See* Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-11 (eligibility requirements); Op. Att'y Gen. (Sept. 12, 1991), 1991 WL 578031.
[35] *See* Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-11 (eligibility requirements).

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

The Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) provides assistance for voters living abroad. UOCAVA voters may register to vote and request an absentee ballot by Federal Post Card Application (FPCA). They can receive and return an absentee ballot by mail, email, or fax using the Electronic Transmission cover sheet to their county's Circuit Clerk UOCAVA contact.

Important dates:

- The deadline to register to vote and request a UOCAVA absentee ballot is October 5, 2026 for the November 3, 2026 General Election.[36] If the deadline is close, the voter should consider faxing the application.
- If submitting by email or fax, the deadline for UOCAVA voters to vote by absentee ballot is November 3, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. CST.[37]
- If submitting by mail, it must be received by October 24, 2026.[38]

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?

The following individuals with a criminal history have the right to vote:

- A person awaiting trial;
- A person convicted of any out-of-state or federal felony or misdemeanor offense;[39]
- A person not convicted of one of the 23 "disenfranchising" felony or misdemeanor offenses listed below;[40]
- A person in non-adjudicated probation;[41]
- A person convicted of a disqualifying offense who has received a pardon by the Governor,[42] an executive order by the Governor,[43] or a two-thirds vote from the Mississippi Legislature.[44]

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[36] *Id*.

[37] Miss. Sec'y of State, Mississippi Voter Information Guide, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/yallvotedocs/2026%20Mississippi%20Voter%20Information%20Guide.pdf at 1.

[38] Miss Sec'y of State, 2026 Elections Calendar at 13, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/2026%20Elections%20Calendar.pdf; Miss. Code Ann. §23-15-677(2).

[39] *Middleton v. Evers*, 515 So. 2d 940, 944 (Miss. 1987) (conviction in another state); *cf. State ex rel. Muirhead v. State Bd. of Elections Comm'rs*, 259 So. 2d 698 (Miss. 1972) (holding that state constitutional disqualification of those convicted of certain offenses from holding state office applies to convictions by a court in Mississippi and does not apply to federal convictions).

[40] Miss. Const. art. 12, § 241; Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-19; Op. Att'y Gen. No. 2009-00210 (July 9, 2009), 2009 WL 2517257.

[41] Miss. Const. art. 12, § 241; Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-19; Op. Att'y Gen. No. 2009-00210 (July 9, 2009), 2009 WL 2517257.

[42] Miss. Const. art. 5, § 124.

[43] Miss. Code Ann. § 47-7-41.

[44] Miss. Const. art. 12, § 253.

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The following individuals are ineligible to vote:

- A person convicted in a Mississippi court of one of the following "disenfranchising" felony or misdemeanor offense: (1) voter fraud, (2) murder, (3) rape, (4) bribery, (5) theft, (6) arson, (7) obtaining money or goods under false pretense, (8) perjury, (9) forgery, (10) embezzlement, (11) bigamy, (12) armed robbery, (13) extortion, (14) felony bad check, (15) felony shoplifting, (16) larceny, (17) receiving stolen property, (18) robbery, (19) timber larceny, (20) unlawful taking of a motor vehicle, (21) statutory rape, (22) carjacking, and (23) larceny under lease or rental agreement.[45]

Rights Restoration: Rights restoration is not an automatic process in Mississippi. A person may gain their right to vote after being convicted of a disqualifying offense either by a pardon from the Governor, an executive order from the Governor, or by a two-thirds vote of the Mississippi Legislature.[46] While not impossible, it is very rare for individuals to have their right to vote restored by the state legislature,[47] and Mississippi Governors have infrequently granted pardons.[48]

- Governor Pardon: A person convicted of the above felonies may seek a pardon from the governor, which in turn would restore their voting rights. The voter must publish their petition for pardon in a newspaper in the county in which the felony was committed (or an adjoining county, if no such newspaper exists).[49]
- Executive Order: A person convicted of the above felonies may also send a written request to the governor for restoration of their civil rights.[50]
- Two-Thirds Vote of Mississippi Legislature: The Mississippi may restore voting rights by a two-thirds vote of both houses.[51]

Individuals looking for step-by-step information on the Mississippi rights restoration process may request rights restoration support from MS Votes by filling out their online form.

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

Eligible voters with a criminal history (see Question 12) may register and vote from a state or federal jail or prison.

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[45] Miss. Const. art. 12, § 241; Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-19; Op. Att'y Gen. No. 2009-00210 (July 9, 2009), 2009 WL 2517257.

[46] Miss. Const. art. 5, § 124; Miss. Const. art. 12, § 253; Miss. Code Ann. § 47-7-41; *see also* Voter Right Restoration Fact Sheet, https://www.splcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/files/leg_vr_voter_registration_processes_and_summaries-ms_apr_2022.pdf.

[47] Caleb Bedillion, *Who Can and Can't Vote in Mississippi: A Guide to the State's Lifetime Voting Ban*, Marshall Project (Jul. 24, 2024), https://www.themarshallproject.org/2024/03/25/mississippi-voting-rights-ban-felony-conviction ("Since 1997, only about 200 people have had their voting rights restored through this process.").

[48] *Mississippi Restoration of Rights & Record Relief,* Collateral Consequences Resource Center (May 12, 2025), https://ccresourcecenter.org/state-restoration-profiles/mississippi-restoration-of-rights-pardon-expungement-sealing-2/ ("Governor Tate Reeves (2020 to present) has issued no pardons to date, Governor Bryant (2012-2020) has issued no pardons . . . Governor Barbour granted no more than a handful of pardons until the very end of his tenure in 2012, when he issued 215 clemency grants.").

[49] Miss. Const. art. 5, § 124.

[50] Miss. Code Ann. § 47-7-41.

[51] Miss. Const. art. 12, § 253.

Incarcerated individuals should use the address where they were residents before their incarceration or where they plan to return after their incarceration as their voter residency. Individuals may not use the address of a state Department of Corrections facility[52] or a local jail address[53] as their voting residence address.

Eligible incarcerated voters may vote absentee.[54] Incarcerated voters must request an absentee ballot from their home county circuit clerk beginning 60 days before an election, and they may submit this initial request either by phone or by sending a letter. In their initial request and with all correspondence with their circuit court, incarcerated voters should use their correctional facility's address as the mailing address and include their inmate number on the mailing address line to expedite the mailing process.[55]

Once an absentee ballot application is mailed to the voter, the voter may claim incarceration as a temporary or permanent physical disability to receive an absentee ballot.[56] An incarcerated voter who is outside of their county of residence on Election Day may also select the "outside county" option to receive a ballot. However, absentee ballot applications under this option must be sworn to and subscribed before an official who is authorized to administer oaths or other official authorized to witness absentee balloting.[57] Such individuals may be a public notary.

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

If the voter's qualifications to vote have been challenged, the voter may still cast a ballot.[58] The voter should immediately explain to the poll managers why the challenge is inappropriate and present any evidence they have to prove it. Poll managers will then decide if the challenge is appropriate or not. No matter what the poll managers decide, however, the voter is still entitled to fill out a paper ballot. If poll managers cannot agree that the challenge is inappropriate, they will set aside the ballot to be counted separately.[59]

Absentee voters likewise may still cast an absentee ballot. Election officials will review the available evidence, including any affidavit the voter provided when voting absentee, and decide if the challenge is appropriate.[60]

[52] *See* Miss. Code Ann. § 47-1-63.
[53] *See* Op. Atty. Gen. 2000-0644, 2000 WL 1648425.
[54] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-713(i).
[55] Miss. Center for Just., Our Every Mississippian Voting Guide, https://mscenterforjustice.org/our-work/impact-litigation/our-every-mississippian-voting-guide/.
[56] Miss. Center for Just., A Guide to Voting in Mississippi when in Prison (2022), https://mscenterforjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/20200929_Voting-in-Mississippi-with-a-Criminal-Conviction-While-In-Prison-or-Jail_v21_Rev2_FINAL.pdf.
[57] Miss. Code Ann § 23-15-721.
[58] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-579.
[59] *Id.*
[60] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-643.

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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. Central Time on Election Day.[61] A voter in line at the polling place by 7:00 p.m. must be allowed to vote.[62]

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

    Voters can determine their proper polling place by checking the Mississippi Secretary of State website's Polling Place Locator. Polling place locations for Municipal elections may differ from the polling places for County or general elections. To find out where a voter's polling place is for municipal elections, they should contact their County Circuit Clerk or Municipal Clerk.

    Voters can verify the polling place listed on the Voter Notification Card they received from the local election authority before the election.[63]

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

    No, employers in Mississippi are not required to give employees time off work to vote. Voters who have to work during Election Day may, however, vote absentee in person at the office of the Circuit Clerk or Municipal Clerk as soon as September 21, 2026 and no later than 12 PM CST (noon) on October 31, 2026.[64]

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

    A voter who is standing in line at the polling place by 7:00 p.m. must be allowed to vote.[65]

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

    Any one of the following types of photo IDs may be used on Election Day:

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[61] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-541(1); Miss. Sec'y of State, Mississippi Voter Information Guide at 2, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/yallvotedocs/2026%20Mississippi%20Voter%20Information%20Guide.pdf.

[62] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-541(1) (stating that the polls shall "be kept open until the last qualified voter, who was standing in line at the polling place at 7:00 p.m., has cast his or her ballot, or 7:00 p.m., whichever is later.").

[63] Miss. Sec'y of State, Mississippi Voter Information Guide at 2, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/yallvotedocs/2026%20Mississippi%20Voter%20Information%20Guide.pdf.

[64] Miss. Sec'y of State, Mississippi Voter Information Guide at 1, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/yallvotedocs/2026%20Mississippi%20Voter%20Information%20Guide.pdf.

[65] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-541(1) (stating that the polls shall "be kept open until the last qualified voter, who was standing in line at the polling place at 7:00 p.m., has cast their ballot, or 7:00 p.m., whichever is later.").

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1. A driver's license;
2. A photo ID card issued by a branch, department, or entity of the State of Mississippi;
3. A United States passport;
4. A government employee ID card;
5. A firearms license;
6. A student photo ID issued by an accredited Mississippi university, college, or community/junior college;
7. A United States military ID;
8. A tribal photo ID;
9. Any other photo ID issued by any branch, department, agency or entity of the United States government or any State government; or
10. A Mississippi Voter Identification Card.[66]

If a registered voter does not have any other acceptable forms of photo ID, a free Mississippi Voter Identification Card will be provided to the voter if requested.[67] A voter can obtain this card by bringing to any Circuit Clerk's office in Mississippi one of the following types of documents:

- any expired but valid photo identity document having the voter's name and photograph issued by the U.S. government or any U.S. state;
- a birth certificate or any other document with the voter's full legal name, date and place of birth;
- a Social Security card;
- a Medicare card;
- a Medicaid card;
- a Mississippi Voter Registration Card; or
- any of the following, as long as it includes the voter's name and current address:
    - utility bill issued within the preceding six months;
    - bank statement issued within the preceding six months;
    - paycheck issued within the preceding six months;
    - government check issued within the preceding six months;
    - IRS Form W-2, Wage and Tax Statement issued within the current calendar year; or
    - any other government document issued within the current calendar year.[68]

If the voter lacks all of these types of documents, the clerk may verify birth information free of charge if the voter provides the voter's full legal name, date of birth, state of birth, and the mother's maiden name.[69] A voter can obtain free transportation to the Circuit Clerk's office to obtain a Voter ID by calling 1-800-829-6786.[70]

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[66] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-563(2); Miss. Sec'y of State, Mississippi Voter Information Guide, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/yallvotedocs/2026%20Mississippi%20Voter%20Information%20Guide.pdf at 2.

[67] Miss. Sec'y of State, How to Get a MS Voter ID Card, https://www.sos.ms.gov/yall-vote/voter-id/how-get-ms-voter-id-card.

[68] Miss. Sec'y of State, *Mississippi Voter ID: What You Need to Know*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/Elections/FAQ%20Voter%20ID.pdf.

[69] Miss. Sec'y of State, *How to Get a MS Voter ID Card*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/voter-id/how-to-get.

[70] Miss. Sec'y of State, *Need a Ride?*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/voter-id/ride.

A voter may use an expired photo ID as long as it is one of the above-listed acceptable forms of photo ID and is not more than 10 years old.[71]

The name on the photo ID only has to be substantially similar to the voter's name in the poll book. A name is substantially similar if:

- the voter's name on the presented photo ID is slightly different from the voter's name as it appears on the poll book;
- the voter's name on the presented photo ID (or on the poll book) is a customary derivation or abbreviation of the formal name, such as Bill, Will or Billy for William, Rick, Rich or Dick for Richard, or Meg for Margaret;
- the voter's name on the presented photo ID includes an initial or middle name which does not appear on the poll book, or vice versa;
- a first name, middle name, maiden name or initial of the voter appears in a different order on the presented photo ID than on the poll book, or vice versa; or
- the voter's middle or last name on the presented photo ID is different than their middle or last name on the poll book because of marriage or divorce, the name is substantially similar if:
    - a part of the name, address OR date of birth on the presented photo ID matches a part of the voter's name, address OR date of birth on the poll book, and
    - the photograph on the presented photo ID fairly depicts the voter.[72]

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

Yes, a registered voter who does not have valid identification is still entitled to vote by an Affidavit Ballot.[73] The Affidavit Ballot will be counted if the voter:

- Returns to the circuit clerk's office, or to the municipal clerk's office for municipal elections, within five (5) business days after the date of the election and presents an acceptable form of photo identification;
- Returns to the circuit clerk's office within five (5) business days after the date of the election to obtain the Mississippi Voter Identification Card, or in a municipal election, returns to the municipal clerk's office within five (5) business days after the date of the election to present their Mississippi Voter Identification Card or Temporary Mississippi Voter Identification Card; or
- Returns to the circuit clerk's office, or to the municipal clerk's office for municipal elections, within five (5) business days after the date of the election to execute a separate Affidavit of Religious Objection.

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[71] Miss. Sec'y of State, *Mississippi Voter ID: What You Need to Know*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/Elections/FAQ%20Voter%20ID.pdf ("Valid means an official government document that establishes the voter's identity and has no expiration date or has an issuance date not more than ten (10) years prior to the date the document is presented.").

[72] Miss. Sec'y of State, *2026 County Elections Handbook* at 48, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/Elections/County%20Election%20Handbook.revised%209.18.2023.pdf.

[73] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-573(1); Miss. Sec'y of State, Mississippi Voter Information Guide at 2, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/Elections/VoterInformationGuide.pdf.

The deadline to return to the clerk's office is 5:00 p.m. Central Time on November 10, 2026 for the general election.[74]

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?

A voter may vote by an Affidavit Ballot if the voter's name is not in the voter registration roll and is at the correct polling place.[75] If a voter casts an Affidavit Ballot in the wrong polling place, the entire ballot will be rejected and will not be counted.[76]

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

A provisional ballot is the same as an Affidavit Ballot.[77] A voter may be asked to vote an Affidavit Ballots in the following circumstances:

- The voter's name does not appear on the pollbook;
- The voter has moved within the city, district, county, or municipality and did not notify the Circuit Clerk, Municipal Clerk, or Election Commission;
- Voter's name was erroneously purged;
- Voter has been illegally denied registration; or,
- Voter is a first-time unverified mail-in voter, and does not have an approved form of identification.[78]

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

A voter can cast an affidavit/provisional ballot if:

- their name does not appear on the pollbook, or
- they do not present an acceptable photo ID, or
- they present an acceptable photo ID but the picture does not fairly depict the voter, or
- they present an acceptable photo ID but the name is not substantially similar to the voter's name as it appears on the pollbook.[79]

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[74] Miss. Const., Art. 12, §249A; Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-573(3)(d)(i); Miss. Sec'y of State, *2026 Elections Calendar at 14*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/sites/default/files/elections/2026%20Elections%20Calendar.pdf; Miss. Sec'y of State, Mississippi Voter Information Guide at 2, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/yallvotedocs/2026%20Mississippi%20Voter%20Information%20Guide.pdf.

[75] Miss. Sec'y of State, *Poll Managers Election Day Activities*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/2020/2020%20PEC%20Poll%20Managers%20Election%20Day%20Activities%20(Full%20Page%20Slides).pdf at 16.

[76] *Id.*

[77] *See generally* Miss. Code Ann. §23-15-573.

[78] *Id.* at §23-15-573(1).

[79] Miss. Sec'y of State, *2026 County Election Handbook*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/Elections/County%20Election%20Handbook.revised%209.18.2023.pdf at 52.

If the voter is within one of these categories, they must complete an affidavit with their complete name, all addresses and telephone numbers, a signature, and a signature of one of the election managers.[80] The voter must also sign a separate sign-in sheet for affidavit voters.[81]

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

The Poll Manager will fill in the appropriate sections of the provisional/Affidavit Ballot's envelope and sign it. It will then be sealed and placed in the ballot box. The Poll Manager should then provide the voter written information on how the voter can find out if their vote was counted. If it was not counted, the voter should receive information about why it was not counted.[82]

The voter may contact the Secretary of State's office to find out if their vote was counted:

Mississippi Secretary of State's Office
Elections Division
Post Office Box 136
401 Mississippi Street
Jackson, MS 39205
Phone (601) 359-1350

HOW TO VOTE: IN-PERSON EARLY VOTING

(in this state defined as: in-person absentee voting)

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

Yes, in Mississippi it is called "in-person absentee voting." Under Mississippi law, eligible voters may vote in-person absentee beginning September 21, 2026 (45 days before the November 3, 2026 General Election) through 12:00 p.m. Central Time on October 31, 2026 (the Saturday before Election Day).[83]

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

Yes, only the following categories of people entitled to vote by in-person absentee before Election Day:

[80] Miss. Code Ann. §23-15-573(1)(b).
[81] *Id.* at § 23-15-573(3)(a).
[82] Miss. Code Ann. §23-15-573(4).
[83] Miss. Sec'y of State, *Mississippi Voter Information Guide* at 1, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/yallvotedocs/2026%20Mississippi%20Voter%20Information%20Guide.pdf.

1. Any student, teacher, or administrator at any college, university, junior college, high school, or elementary school who is away from their county of residence because of their studies or employment, or that person's live-in spouse or dependent.
2. An employee of a member of the Mississippi congressional delegation who is away from their county of residence because of their employment, or that person's live-in spouse or dependent.
3. Anyone who is away from their county of residence on Election Day for any reason.
4. Any person who has a temporary or permanent physical disability that will make it especially hard to vote in person on Election Day.
5. A parent, spouse or dependent of a person with a physical disability who is hospitalized outside of their county of residence or more than fifty (50) miles distant from their residence, if the parent, spouse or dependent will be with such person on Election Day.
6. Any person who is sixty-five (65) years of age or older.
7. Any member of the Mississippi congressional delegation absent from Mississippi on Election Day, and the spouse and dependents of such member of the congressional delegation.
8. Any person who is required to be at work on Election Day when the polls will be open.
9. Any person who is incarcerated in the county where he or she is registered to vote and has not been convicted of one of the disenfranchising crimes.[84]

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

Absentee ballots become available at the Circuit Clerk's Office on September 19, 2026 for the November 3, 2026 general election.[85] The County Circuit Clerk's Offices are open during normal business hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday) and until noon on the two Saturdays preceding the election, October 24 and October 31, 2026.[86] Absentee voters may cast their vote in person at the county registrar's office beginning September 21, 2026 up until 12:00 p.m. on Saturday immediately preceding an election held on a Tuesday (October 31, 2026).[87] **The deadline for in-person absentee voting is October 31, 2026 at 12:00 p.m. (noon) Central Time for the November 3, 2026 general election.**[88]

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

Unless a voter is eligible to vote absentee by mail, a voter must cast their absentee ballot in person at their Municipal Clerk's Office or County Circuit Clerk's Office.

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

[84] *Id.*; Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-713.
[85] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15- 715(b); *see, e.g.*, Miss. Sec'y of State, *2026 Elections Calendar*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/2026%20Elections%20Calendar.pdf at 11.
[86] *See* Miss. Sec'y of State, 2026 Elections Calendar, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/2026%20Elections%20Calendar.pdf at 11
[87] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-637.
[88] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-715; *see* Miss. Sec'y of State, *Mississippi Voter Information Guide*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/yallvotedocs/2026%20Mississippi%20Voter%20Information%20Guide.pdf at 1.

Voters casting an absentee ballot in person must present one of the following forms of acceptable photo ID:

- A driver's license;
- A government-issued photo ID card;
- A United States passport;
- A government employee photo ID card;
- A firearms license;
- A student photo ID issued by an accredited Mississippi university, college, or community/junior college;
- A United States military photo ID;
- A tribal photo ID
- Any other photo ID issued by any branch, department, agency, or entity of the United States government or any State agency; or
- A Mississippi Voter Identification Card.[89]

If a registered voter does not have any of the acceptable forms of photo ID, a Mississippi Voter Identification Card will be provided at no cost to the voter at any Circuit Clerk's Office in Mississippi. Application for a card may be made during normal business hours.[90]

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

If the voter needs additional assistance voting early in person, they should call the Secretary of State's Election Hotline at 1-800-829-6786, or contact their county clerk (who is responsible for administering absentee voting), whose information can be found here.

HOW TO VOTE: VOTE BY MAIL

(in this state defined as: mail-in absentee voting)

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

Generally no, a voter must request an Official Application for Absentee Elector's Ballot which will be sent in the mail. (see below for an exception for permanently disabled voters). A voter can request an absentee ballot as follows:

- In Person: A voter must appear in person before the county registrar (generally the county circuit court clerk) or, for municipal elections, the city clerk and then request, execute, and file an application for an absentee ballot. If ballots have been printed, the

[89] Miss. Sec'y of State, *Mississippi Voter Information Guide*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/yallvotedocs/2026%20Mississippi%20Voter%20Information%20Guide.pdf at 2.
[90] Miss. Sec'y of State, *How to Get a MS Voter ID Card*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/yall-vote/voter-id/how-get-ms-voter-id-card.

voter will also cast their ballot at that time; if ballots have not yet been printed, the ballot will be mailed to the voter.[91]

- By Telephone: Voters can also request by telephone that the registrar mail an absentee ballot application to them.[92]
- By Mail: A voter can mail in a request for an absentee ballot if the voter temporarily resides out of the county of their residence, has a temporary or permanent physical disability, is 65 years old or older, any person who is incarcerated in prison or jail in the county where the person is registered to vote and has not been convicted of a disenfranchising crime, or is the parent, spouse, or dependent of someone with a physical disability who is hospitalized outside the voter's county of residence or over 50 miles away from the voter's residence (as long as the voter will be with that person on Election Day).[93] Applications from voters temporarily residing outside the county must be sworn to and subscribed before an official who is authorized to administer oaths or to witness absentee balloting. Applications from voters with a temporary or permanent physical disability may be witnessed by any person at least 18 years old.[94]

A parent, child, spouse, sibling, legal guardian, those with power of attorney for a voter's affairs, or the agent of the voter may orally request an absentee ballot application on behalf of the voter if the person is designated in writing by the voter with a witness who is a Mississippi resident. Written designations are valid for one year.[95]

NOTE: All absentee by mail voters except those who have a temporary or permanent physical disability are required to have their application and ballot "notarized or signed by an official authorized to administer oaths for absentee voting." An absentee voter who has a temporary or permanent physical disability may have any person eighteen (18) years or older serve as the attesting witness for their application and ballot. However, a candidate, or the spouse, parent, or child of a candidate, may not be the attesting witness for any ballot on which the candidate's name appears unless the voter is a first-degree relative of the witness.

Photo identification is not required for absentee voters who return their ballots by mail.

Permanently Physically Disabled Voters

[91] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-715(a).
[92] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-657.
[93] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-715(b).
[94] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-715(b). *See also* Miss. Code Ann. § 11-1-1 (list of officials authorized to administer oaths). Typically, for in-person absentee ballot applications, the municipal clerk will administer the oath but it may also be administered by: a judge of any court of record; clerk of such court; court reporter of such court; master; member of the board of supervisors; justice court judge; notary public; mayor, or police justice of a city, town, or village; municipal clerk; any officer of any other state or the United States authorized by law to administer oaths. Under Mississippi regulations, notaries public in Mississippi are required to waive any fee for notarizing absentee voters' applications and ballots. *See* https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/Business/Revised%20Mississippi%20Law%20on%20Notarial%20Acts%20Notary%20Rules.pdf. Post office employees also may administer the oath, in which case they must authenticate their signatures with the post office's cancellation stamp. Other officers should not apply their seals. Voters in the Armed Forces also may execute their affidavits before a commissioned officer, warrant officer, or noncommissioned officer not lower in grade than sergeant rating. Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-631(1)(c).
[95] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-627.

A permanently physically disabled voter may submit an absentee ballot application together with a statement signed by a physician or licensed nurse practitioner, which states the physician is a licensed, practicing medical doctor or nurse practitioner and the voter is permanently physically disabled to such an extent that it is difficult for them to vote in person. This one absentee ballot application, when accompanied by a physician or nurse practitioner's statement, entitles the voter to automatically receive an absentee ballot for all elections on a continuing basis without the need for another application.

The Circuit Clerk's Office must send absentee ballots to those voters who are on the permanently disabled voters list no later than 40 days prior to each election.[96]

Note: Temporarily (and not permanently) disabled voters are not eligible to receive absentee ballots automatically and must apply separately for an absentee ballot for each election in which they are eligible to vote on an absentee basis.

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

Yes, under Mississippi law, only the following categories of people are entitled to vote absentee by mail-in ballot:

- Any person who is temporarily residing outside of their county of residence, and the ballot must be mailed to an address outside the county.[97]
- Any person who has a temporary or permanent physical disability that would make it especially hard to vote in person or could reasonably cause danger to himself, herself or others. [98]
- The parent, spouse or dependent of a person with a temporary or permanent physical disability who is hospitalized more than 50 miles away from their residence (but only if the parent, spouse or dependent will be with the disabled person on Election Day).[99]
- Any person who is 65 years of age or older. [100]
- Any member of the Mississippi congressional delegation absent from Mississippi on election day, and their spouse and dependents.[101]
- Any qualified voter who is required to be at work or on-call on election day when the polls are open.[102]
- Any qualified elector who is incarcerated and has not been convicted of a disenfranchising crime.[103]

NOTE: All absentee by mail voters except those who have a temporary or permanent physical disability are required to have their application and ballot "notarized or signed by an official authorized to administer oaths for absentee voting." An absentee voter who has a temporary or permanent physical disability may have any person 18 years or older serve as the attesting witness for their application and ballot. However, a candidate, or the spouse, parent, or child of

[96] Miss. Code Ann. §23-15-629.
[97] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-713(c).
[98] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-713(d).
[99] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-713(e).
[100] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-713(f).
[101] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-713(g).
[102] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-713(h).
[103] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-713(i).

a candidate, may not be the attesting witness for any ballot on which the candidate's name appears unless the voter is a first-degree relative of the witness. Photo identification is not required for absentee voters who return their ballots by mail.[104]

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

Mail-in absentee Ballots may be requested beginning **September 21, 2026** for the November 3, 2026 general election.[105] There is no deadline to submit a mail-in absentee ballot application; however, voters should keep in mind that the mail-in absentee voting postmark deadline is Election Day (which is on November 3, 2026).

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

Yes, someone can assist a voter with filling out the application, but the voter should understand that all absentee ballot applications must be signed by an official authorized to administer an oath, such as a notary public, which confirms that the voter is the one completing the application, unless the voter is temporary or permanently physically disabled. Temporary or permanently physically disabled voters still need to have their applications witnessed, but may have it witnessed by any person who is at least 18 years of age (as long as they're not the candidate).[106]

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?

Once the voter completes their application, anyone can mail it back to the voter's County Circuit Clerk's Office.[107] There is no deadline to submit a mail-in absentee ballot application; however, voters should keep in mind that the mail-in absentee voting postmark deadline is Election Day (which is on November 3, 2026).

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

A photo ID is not required to vote by absentee ballot by mail; it is required for in-person absentee voting in the registrar's office.[108]

See Question 19.

[104] Miss. Code Ann. §23-15-629.
[105] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-715 (45 days prior to Election Day).
[106] Miss. Code Ann. §23-15-629.
[107] Miss. Sec'y of State, Step-By-Step Absentee Guide, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/yallvotedocs/Step-by-Step%20Voter%20Guide%20to%20Absentee%20Voting.pdf.
[108] Miss. Sec'y of State, *Exemptions*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/yall-vote/voter-id/exemptions; see *also* Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-719(1).

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 contact their County Circuit Clerk's Office for more information.

    Mississippi law does not address voting for the unhoused or nontraditional addresses.[109]

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

    There is no deadline to request a mail-in ballot. Voters may submit their request for an absentee mail-in ballot up until Election Day.[110] Voters should keep in mind that the mail-in absentee voting postmark deadline is Election Day (November 3, 2026).

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

    Yes, the status of absentee ballots can be tracked on the Secretary of State tracker page. For additional information, voters should contact their County Circuit Clerk's Office.

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?

    Voters should contact their County Circuit Clerk's Office for more information.

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

    All absentee by mail voters except those who have a temporary or permanent physical disability are required to have their application and ballot "notarized or signed by an official authorized to administer oaths for absentee voting."[111] An absentee voter who has a temporary or permanent physical disability may have any person eighteen (18) years or older serve as the attesting witness for their application and ballot.[112] However, a candidate, or the spouse, parent, or child of a candidate, may not be the attesting witness for any ballot on which the

[109] *See* Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-11.
[110] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-715(b).
[111] Miss. Code Ann. §§ 23-15-627, 23-15-721(1). *See also* Miss. Code Ann. § 11-1-1 (list of officials authorized to administer oaths). This list includes but is not limited to: a judge of any court of record; clerk of such court; court reporter of such court; master; member of the board of supervisors; justice court judge; notary public; mayor, or police justice of a city, town, or village; municipal clerk; any officer of any other state or the United States authorized by law to administer oaths. Post office employees also may administer the oath, in which case they must authenticate their signatures with the post office's cancellation stamp. Other officers should not apply their seals. Voters in the Armed Forces also may execute their affidavits before a commissioned officer, warrant officer, or noncommissioned officer not lower in grade than sergeant rating. Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-631(1)(c).
[112] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-715(b); Miss. Code Ann. §§ 23-15-627, 23-15-631, 23-15-721(2).

candidate's name appears unless the voter is a first-degree relative of the witness.[113] Photo identification is not required for absentee voters who return their ballots by mail.[114]

Absentee voters who mark their ballots in person in their county of residence must do so at the county registrar's office (typically, the county circuit court clerk's office) unless the voter has a temporary or permanent physical disability or is at least 65 years old. The county registrar or a deputy must be the attesting witness for the ballot.[115] The voter should bring satisfactory identification. See Question #19.

A photo ID is not required to vote by absentee ballot by mail; it is required for in-person absentee voting in the registrar's office.[116]

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

Yes, any absentee voter who needs assistance voting by reason of blindness, disability, or inability to read or write is entitled to have some person of their choice—other than a candidate on the ballot, a first degree relative of a candidate on the ballot (unless the person requesting assistance is a first degree relative of that person), a poll watcher observing the polling place, the voter's employer, an agent of the voter's employer, or an officer or agent of the voter's union—mark the voter's choices or assist the voter in marking their choices on the ballot and complete the absentee voter's affidavit.[117]

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?

Absentee ballots cast by mail must be postmarked on or before the date of the Election and received by the registrar no more than five business days after the election. **The postmark deadline for the general election is Tuesday, November 3, 2026 (Election Day).**[118] **All ballots must be received by 5:00 pm Central Time on November 10, 2026 in order to be counted**.[119]

It is illegal for ballots cast away from the county registrar's office to be returned by hand delivery.[120]

Military and Overseas Voters: Military and overseas voters who are absent from their county of residence and qualified to vote in Mississippi are subject to the voting procedures under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act ("UOCAVA").[121] See Question # 11.

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[113] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-631(e).
[114] Miss. Sec'y of State, *Exemptions*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/yall-vote/voter-id/exemptions.
[115] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-631(1)(a)-(b).
[116] Miss. Sec'y of State, *Exemptions*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/yall-vote/voter-id/exemptions; *see also* Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-719(1).
[117] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-631(1)(f).
[118] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-637.
[119] Miss. Code Ann. §§ 23-15-637(1)(a), 23-15-731; Miss. Sec'y of State, 2026 Elections Calendar at 14, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/2026%20Elections%20Calendar.pdf.
[120] Miss. Sec'y of State, *Absentee Voting Information*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/yall-vote/absentee-voting-information; Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-631(1)(c).
[121] *See* Miss. Code Ann. §§ 23-15-671 – 23-15-701; Miss. Sec'y of State, *Military & Overseas Voter Information,*

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

    It is illegal for ballots cast away from the county registrar's office to be returned by hand delivery. In-person absentee ballots must be voted at the County Circuit Clerk's office.[122]

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

    No, it is illegal for ballots cast away from the county registrar's office to be returned by hand delivery.[123]

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?

    Voters should contact their County Circuit Clerk's Office for assistance. A voter who mistakenly marks a paper ballot is entitled to receive a total of three (3) ballots. If a ballot is spoiled, write "Spoiled" across the face of the ballot and place it in the spoiled ballot envelope.[124]

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

    Voters may still be able to vote in person by regular ballot on Election Day (November 3, 2026) and should contact their County Circuit Clerk's Office for assistance.

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

    As long as the voter has not already submitted the absentee ballot and is otherwise qualified, the voter is allowed to vote in person by regular ballot.[125] If the voter has already submitted the absentee ballot, that ballot is considered final and the voter may not vote in person on Election Day.[126]

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https://www.sos.ms.gov/index.php/elections-voting/military-overseas-voter-information; https://www.fvap.gov/mississippi.

[122] *See* Miss. Code Ann. §§ 23-15-637 (1) (instructions for how to cast absentee ballots in person and by mail); Miss. Code Ann. §23-15-631; Miss. Code Ann. §23-15-719; Miss. Sec'y of State, *Absentee Voting Information*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/yall-vote/absentee-voting-information.

[123] *Id.*

[124] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-553.

[125] *Cf.* Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-639(1)(b) (procedure for accepting or rejecting absentee ballots in the counting process includes checking whether voter voted in person at the polls on Election Day).

[126] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-637(3).

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HOW TO VOTE: ABSENTEE

(in this state defined as the enumerated list of categories below)

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

Electors entitled to vote absentee (in-person): Under Mississippi law, the following categories of people are entitled to vote by in-person absentee:

1. Any student, teacher, or administrator at any college, university, junior college, high school, or elementary school who is away from their county of residence because of their studies or employment, or that person's live-in spouse or dependent.
2. An employee of a member of the Mississippi congressional delegation who is away from their county of residence because of their employment, or that person's live-in spouse or dependent.
3. Any person who is away from their county of residence on Election Day for any reason.
4. Any person who has a temporary or permanent physical disability that will make it especially hard to vote in person on Election Day.
5. A parent, spouse or dependent of a person with a physical disability who is hospitalized outside of their county of residence or more than fifty (50) miles distant from their residence, if the parent, spouse or dependent will be with such person on Election Day.
6. Any person who is sixty-five (65) years of age or older.
7. Any member of the Mississippi congressional delegation absent from Mississippi on Election Day, and the spouse and dependents of such member of the congressional delegation.
8. Any person who is required to be at work on Election Day when the polls will be open.[127]
9. Any person who is incarcerated in the county where he or she is registered to vote and has not been convicted of a disenfranchising crime.[128]

Electors entitled to vote absentee (mail-in): Under Mississippi law, the following categories of people are entitled to vote absentee by mail-in ballot:

1. Any person who is temporarily residing outside of their county of residence, and the ballot must be mailed to an address outside the county.
2. Any person who has a temporary or permanent physical disability that will make it especially hard to vote in person on Election Day.
3. A parent, spouse or dependent of a person with a physical disability who is hospitalized outside of their county of residence or more than fifty (50) miles distant from their residence, if the parent, spouse or dependent will be with such person on Election Day.
4. Any person who is sixty-five (65) years of age or older.

[127] *Id.*; Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-713.
[128] *Id.*

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5. Any person incarcerated and not convicted of a disenfranchising crime.[129]

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

Absentee ballots become available at the Circuit Clerk's Office on September 19, 2026 for the November 3, 2026 general election.[130] **Mississippi does not have a deadline for requesting an absentee ballot**; however, voters should keep in mind that the in-person absentee voting deadline is Saturday, October 31, 2026 by 12:00 pm Central Time and the mail-in absentee voting postmark deadline is Election Day (November 3, 2026).[131]

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

Voters casting an absentee ballot in person must present one of the following forms of acceptable photo ID:

- A driver's license;
- A government-issued photo ID card;
- A United States passport;
- A government employee photo ID card;
- A firearms license;
- A student photo ID issued by an accredited Mississippi university, college, or community/junior college;
- A United States military photo ID;
- A tribal photo ID;
- Any other photo ID issued by any branch, department, agency, or entity of the United States government or any State agency; or
- A Mississippi Voter Identification Card.[132]

Voters are not required to mail a copy of their photo ID with their absentee ballot application or ballot envelope.

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

Voters should contact their County Circuit Clerk's office for more information.

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

[129] Miss. Sec'y of State, *Step-By-Step Absentee Guide*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/yallvotedocs/Step-by-Step%20Voter%20Guide%20to%20Absentee%20Voting.pdf at .
[130] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15- 715(b); see, e.g., Miss. Sec'y of State, 2026 Elections Calendar at 12, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/2026%20Elections%20Calendar.pdf.
[131] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-715; see Miss. Sec'y of State, Absentee Voting Information, https://www.sos.ms.gov/absentee-voting-information#ar04.
[132] Miss. Sec'y of State, *Mississippi Voter Information Guide*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/VoterInformationGuide.pdf.

Once you receive your application, fill it out and mail it back to your County Circuit Clerk's Office.[133]

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

Yes, the status of absentee ballots can be tracked on the Secretary of State tracker page. Voters should contact their County Circuit Clerk's Office for more information.

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?

Voters should contact their County Circuit Clerk's Office for more information.

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

All absentee by mail voters except those who have a temporary or permanent physical disability are required to have their application and ballot "notarized or signed by an official authorized to administer oaths for absentee voting."[134] An absentee voter who has a temporary or permanent physical disability may have any person eighteen (18) years or older serve as the attesting witness for their application and ballot.[135] However, a candidate, or the spouse, parent, or child of a candidate, may not be the attesting witness for any ballot on which the candidate's name appears unless the voter is a first-degree relative of the witness.[136] Photo identification is not required for absentee voters who return their ballots by mail.[137]

Absentee voters who mark their ballots in person in their county of residence must do so at the county registrar's office (typically, the county circuit court clerk's office) unless the voter has a temporary or permanent physical disability or is at least 65 years old. The county registrar or a deputy must be the attesting witness for the ballot.[138] The voter should bring acceptable photo identification.

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[133] Miss. Sec'y of State, *Step-By-Step Absentee Guide*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/yallvotedocs/Step-by-Step%20Voter%20Guide%20to%20Absentee%20Voting.pdf.

[134] Miss. Code Ann. §§ 23-15-627, 23-15-721(1). *See also* Miss. Code Ann. § 11-1-1 (list of officials authorized to administer oaths). This list includes but is not limited to: a judge of any court of record; clerk of such court; court reporter of such court; master; member of the board of supervisors; justice court judge; notary public; mayor, or police justice of a city, town, or village; municipal clerk; any officer of any other state or the United States authorized by law to administer oaths. Post office employees also may administer the oath, in which case they must authenticate their signatures with the post office's cancellation stamp. Other officers should not apply their seals. Voters in the Armed Forces also may execute their affidavits before a commissioned officer, warrant officer, or noncommissioned officer not lower in grade than sergeant rating. Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-631(1)(c).

[135] Miss. Code Ann. §§ 23-15-627, 23-15-631, 23-15-721(2).

[136] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-631(e).

[137] Miss. Sec'y of State, *Exemptions*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/yall-vote/voter-id/exemptions.

[138] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-631(1)(a)-(b).

A photo ID is not required to vote by absentee ballot by mail; it is required for in-person absentee voting in the registrar's office.[139]

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

Yes. An absentee voter who affirmatively states to the Circuit Clerk or a deputy clerk that they are blind, physically disabled, or unable to read or write, may receive assistance in the marking of their absentee ballot. The voter may request and receive assistance from anyone of the voter's own choosing other than:

a) A candidate whose name appears on the ballot,
b) The spouse, parent or child of a candidate whose name appears on the ballot,
c) A poll watcher who may be observing in the polling place,
d) The voter's employer or a representative of the voter's employer, or
e) An officer or agent of the voter's union[140]

However, a candidate whose name appears on the ballot, or the spouse, parent or child of a candidate whose name appears on the ballot, may provide assistance to a voter to whom the voter is related within the first degree. A first degree relative is one's parent, child or sibling.[141]

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

Absentee ballots cast by mail must be postmarked on or before the date of the Election and received by the registrar no more than five business days after the election. **The postmark deadline for the general election is Tuesday, November 3, 2026**[142] **All ballots must be received by 5:00 pm Central Time on November 10, 2026 in order to be counted**.[143]

It is illegal for ballots cast away from the county registrar's office to be returned by hand delivery.[144]

Military and Overseas Voters: Military and overseas voters who are absent from their county of residence and qualified to vote in Mississippi are subject to the voting procedures under the

[139] Miss. Sec'y of State, *Exemptions*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/yall-vote/voter-id/exemptions; *see also* Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-719(1).
[140] Miss. Sec'y of State, *County Elections Handbook* at 49 (Rev. 2025), https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/Elections/County%20Election%20Handbook.revised%209.18.2023.pdf; Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-631.
[141] Miss. Sec'y of State, *County Elections Handbook* at 49 (Rev. 2025), https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/Elections/County%20Election%20Handbook.revised%209.18.2023.pdf.
[142] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-637; Miss. Sec'y of State, 2026 Elections Calendar at 11-12, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/2026%20Elections%20Calendar.pdf.
[143] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-637; Miss. Sec'y of State, 2026 Elections Calendar at 14, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/2026%20Elections%20Calendar.pdf; Miss. Code Ann. §§ 23-15-637, 23-15-731.
[144] Miss. Sec'y of State, *Step-by-Step Absentee Voter Guide*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/yallvotedocs/Step-by-Step%20Voter%20Guide%20to%20Absentee%20Voting.pdf (stating mailing the absentee ballot as a step in the process).

Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act ("UOCAVA"). Ballots must be postmarked by November 3, 2026 or sent by mail, email, or fax.[145] Use the Electronic Transmission cover sheet and email or fax the cover sheet and ballot to their county's Circuit Clerk UOCAVA contact.

- If submitting by email or fax, the deadline for UOCAVA voters to vote by absentee ballot is November 3, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. CST.[146]
- If submitting by mail, it must be postmarked by November 3, 2026 and received by 5:00 p.m. on November 10, 2026.[147]

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

It is illegal for ballots cast away from the county registrar's office to be returned by hand delivery. Absentee ballots must be voted in-person at the County Circuit Clerk's office.[148]

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

No, it is illegal for ballots cast away from the county registrar's office to be returned by hand delivery.[149]

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

Voters should contact their County Circuit Clerk's Office for assistance.[150]

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

Voters may still be able to vote in person by regular ballot on Election Day and should contact their County Circuit Clerk's Office for assistance.

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

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[145] Miss. Sec'y of State, Mississippi Voter Information Guide, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/VoterInformationGuide.pdf.
[146] Miss. Sec'y of State, *2026 Elections Calendar*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/2026%20Elections%20Calendar.pdf at 13.
[147] Miss. Sec'y of State, 2026 Elections Calendar, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/2026%20Elections%20Calendar.pdf at 14.
[148] *See* Miss. Code Ann. §§ 23-15-637(1) (instructions for how to cast absentee ballots in person and by mail); Miss. Code Ann. §23-15-631; Miss. Code Ann. §23-15-719; Miss. Sec'y of State, *Step-by-Step Voter Guide*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/yallvotedocs/Step-by-Step%20Voter%20Guide%20to%20Absentee%20Voting.pdf.
[149] *Id.*
[150] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-553.

As long as the voter has not already submitted the absentee ballot, and is otherwise qualified, the voter is allowed to vote in person by regular ballot.[151] If the voter has already submitted the absentee ballot, that ballot is considered final and the voter may not vote in person on Election Day.[152]

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

At the Circuit Clerk's office of the county of the voter's residence. A photo ID is required for in-person absentee voting.[153] Absentee Ballots begin as soon as absentee ballots are available beginning September 21, 2026 through 12:00 p.m. Central Time on October 31, 2026.[154] Circuit Clerk's Offices are open during normal business hours (8 a.m. until 5 p.m., Monday through Friday).[155] The Circuit Clerk's office will also be available on the two Saturdays preceding the election (October 24, 2026 and October 31, 2026) from 8:00 a.m. through 12:00 p.m.[156]

POLLING PLACE ISSUES

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

Voters should contact their County Circuit Clerk's office or call the Secretary of State's Election Hotline at 800-829-6786.

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?

A voter in line at the polling place by 7:00 p.m. must be allowed to vote.[157] Voters should contact their County Circuit Clerk's Office or the Secretary of State's Election Hotline at 800-829-6786.[158]

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

[151] *Cf.* Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-639(1)(b) (procedure for accepting or rejecting absentee ballots in counting process includes checking whether voter voted in person at the polls on Election Day).
[152] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-637.
[153] Miss. Sec'y of State, Step-By-Step Absentee Guide; *see also* Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-719(1).
[154] Miss. Sec'y of State, *Mississippi Voter Information Guide*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/yallvotedocs/2026%20Mississippi%20Voter%20Information%20Guide.pdf at 1.
[155] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-653; Miss. Sec'y of State, *2026 Elections Calendar*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/2026%20Elections%20Calendar.pdf, at 9-11; Miss. Sec'y of State, *Step-by-Step Absentee Voting Guide*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/elections/Step-by-Step%20Guide%20to%20Absentee%20Voting_forweb.pdf.
[156] *See* Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-653.
[157] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-541(1) (stating that the polls shall "be kept open until the last qualified voter, who was standing in line at the polling place at 7:00 p.m., has cast their ballot, or 7:00 p.m., whichever is later.").
[158] Miss. Sec'y of State, *FAQs*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/elections-voting/election-faqs; Miss. Sec'y of State, *County Election Information*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/elections-voting/county-election-information.

Voters should immediately notify the election officers at the polling place if the voting equipment breaks down while the polls are open. If the problem cannot be fixed in a timely manner, a voter can use an emergency paper ballot and should request one if it is not offered.[159]

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

Individuals are prohibited from posting or distributing cards, posters, or other campaign literature within 150 feet from the entrance to the building where any election is being held.[160] Additionally, wearing T-shirts, buttons, stickers, etc., bearing a candidate's name or likeness within one hundred fifty (150) feet of any entrance to a polling place constitutes campaigning or electioneering and is prohibited by Mississippi law.[161]

If a polling place is within one hundred fifty (150) feet of private property, the owner of the private property may post or distribute or permit the posting and distribution of campaign literature on their property.[162] Individuals who are not election officials, voters and credentialed poll watchers may not loiter within thirty (30) feet of the polling place polls.[163]

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

Voters cannot wear T-shirts, buttons, stickers, etc., bearing a candidate's name or likeness within the polling location or within one hundred fifty (150) feet of any entrance to a polling place.[164] While there is no law against taking a photo in the polling location, the voter should not show their completed ballot to anyone else. There is a fine up to $100 for doing so.[165]

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

Poll workers, also known as poll managers, are also prohibited from wearing T-shirts, buttons, stickers, etc., bearing a candidate's name or likeness within one hundred fifty (150) feet of any

[159] Miss. Code Ann. §§ 23-15-525.
[160] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-895.
[161] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-245; Miss. Sec'y of State, *2026 County Elections Handbook*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/Elections/County%20Election%20Handbook.revised%209.18.2023.pdf at 54.
[162] *Id*.
[163] *Id*.
[164] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-245; Miss. Sec'y of State, *County Elections Handbook* at 54 (Rev. 2025), https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/Elections/County%20Election%20Handbook.revised%209.18.2023.pdf.
[165] Miss. Code Ann. § 97-13-45.

entrance to a polling place.[166] A poll manager's responsibility is to ensure an election is conducted fairly and lawfully and, in general, should not do anything that undermines that goal.

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?

The space within 30 feet of any entrance to a polling location is required to be clear of any interference or loitering. If a voter feels unsafe, they should immediately speak with a poll worker, ***not*** a poll watcher.[167]

Mississippi prohibits any person who has or is carrying a deadly weapon from exhibiting the weapon in a threatening manner.[168]

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

A person may be challenged on the following grounds:

1) The voter is not a registered voter in the precinct;
2) The voter is not the registered voter under whose name the voter has applied to vote;
3) The voter has already voted in the election;
4) The voter is not a resident in the precinct where the voter is registered;
5) The voter has illegally registered to vote;
6) The voter has removed their ballot from the polling place; or
7) The voter is otherwise disqualified by law.[169]

The challenge will be considered by all the poll managers at the time it is made. In making a decision upon a challenge, the poll managers must consider the statements of the person making the challenge and of the person challenged as well as any documentation or other available information, time-permitting.[170]

If the poll managers unanimously determine that the challenge is frivolous and not made in good faith, the challenge will be disregarded, and the vote is accepted as though it had not been challenged.[171]

If the poll managers cannot make a unanimous decision, a paper ballot is issued to and voted by the voter. "Challenged" is marked on the back of the ballot with the reason the challenge of the voter was made, the name of the voter is written on the back of the ballot, and the challenged

[166] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-245; Miss. Sec'y of State, *County Elections Handbook* at 41 (Rev. 2025), https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/Elections/County%20Election%20Handbook.revised%209.18.2023.pdf.
[167] *Id.* at 41-42, 54.
[168] Miss. Code Ann. § 97-37-19.
[169] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-571(3).
[170] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-579; Miss. Sec'y of State, *County Elections Handbook* at 52 (Rev. 2025), https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/Elections/County%20Election%20Handbook.revised%209.18.2023.pdf.
[171] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-579(3).

ballot is deposited in the sealed ballot box. At the close of the polls, when the ballot box is opened, the challenged ballots are separately counted, tallied and totaled, with a separate return made of the challenged ballots. All challenged ballots are placed in a separate strong envelope marked for challenged ballots, then the envelope is sealed and deposited into a sealed ballot box.[172]

If the poll managers unanimously determine the challenge is valid or well taken, a paper ballot is issued to and voted by the voter. The ballot is immediately rejected in the following manner:

- "Rejected" is written on the back of the ballot;
- The name of the voter and the reason for rejection is written on the back of the ballot;
- The rejected ballot is deposited in the sealed ballot box.
- At the close of the polls, when the ballot box is opened, all rejected ballots are placed in a separate strong envelope marked for rejected ballots;
- The envelope is sealed and deposited into the sealed ballot box.[173]

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

Voters concerned about police/military presence should contact their County Circuit Clerk's Office or the Secretary of State's Election Hotline at 800-829-6786.

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's name can be removed from the list of registered voters in the following situations:

- The registrant's address has changed to outside of the county,[174]
- Death,
- Written request of the voter,
- Received an adjudication of mental incompetence,
- Conviction of a disenfranchising crime, or
- Disqualification for any other cause.[175]

Any voter whose name was removed in one of the above ways and who subsequently becomes eligible to vote must re-register in order to have their name restored to the statewide voter registration system.

The following steps can be taken to help to determine why a voter's name is not appearing on the list of registered voters:

[172] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-579(4).
[173] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-579(2).
[174] The National Voter Registration Act of 1993 ("NVRA"), Section 8. The Act requires States to conduct a general voter registration list maintenance program that makes a reasonable effort to remove ineligible persons from the voter rolls by reason of the person's death, or a change in the residence of the registrant outside of the jurisdiction, in accordance with procedures set forth in the NVRA.
[175] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-153(1); *see also* Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-151.

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

Contact the registrar's office to see if they have a record of the registration. If not, and if the voter registered at another government agency, contact that agency to see if it has a record of the registration.

If there are more than 30 days prior to the election, the voter has time to register in the county or municipality.

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

See Question # 22.

Ask why the voter was offered a provisional ballot (also called an Affidavit Ballot). A voter should be offered a provisional Affidavit Ballot only when:

- The voter's name does not appear on the poll book for any reason;
- The voter is unable to present acceptable photo identification;
- The voter is not able to cast a regular Election Day ballot under a provision of state or federal law but is otherwise qualified to vote;
- The voter is voting as a result of court or other order extending the time for the closing of the polls on Election Day;
- The voter has moved within the county or municipality within 30 days of the election;
- The voter believes that they have been illegally denied registration; or
- The voter is a first-time, unverified mail-in voter and does not have a HAVA-approved form of identification.[176]

Other than for the above reasons, the voter should be able to cast a regular ballot. A provisional ballot should be a last resort.

After voting by provisional Affidavit Ballot, a Poll Manager will place the Affidavit Ballot in an envelope. The affidavit is printed and written on the envelope itself. The affidavit envelope must include: the name of the voter, the voter's address (current and, if moved, previous), telephone number (if the voter has one), a statement of the voter's belief that they are

[176] Miss. Code Ann. §§ 23-15-13, 23-15-563(3), 23-15-573; 52 U.S.C. § 21083(a)(5). *See also* Miss. Sec'y of State, *County Elections Handbook* at 50 (Rev. 2025), https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/Elections/County%20Election%20Handbook.revised%209.18.2023.pdf.

registered to vote in the jurisdiction, the signature of the voter, and the signature of one of the Poll Managers.[177]

Voters can track the status of their Affidavit Ballot here.

The Poll Manager must give the voter written instructions on how to find out if their Affidavit Ballot was counted. A provisional Affidavit Ballot may be rejected for the following reasons (this list is not exclusive):

- the voter is not a registered voter of the county;
- failure of both the voter and Poll Manager to sign the affidavit envelope;
- the voter is casting a ballot in a precinct in which they are not entitled to vote; or
- failure to: (1) present an acceptable form of photo ID, (2) obtain the free Mississippi Voter ID card, or (3) complete an Affidavit of Religious Objection in the Circuit Clerk's office within five business days after Election Day.[178]

ACCESSIBILITY/ASSISTANCE

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

Polling Places with OMR Equipment (Paper Ballots): Voters must receive written and/or verbal instructions from the poll managers on how to cast their ballot before entering the voting booth. If voters need additional instructions on how to operate the machine, two election officers may, if necessary, enter the booth and give the voter instructions. However, the election officers may not in any way seek to influence the vote. After providing the necessary assistance, the officers must leave the booth so the voter can cast their vote in secret.[179]

Polling Places with DRE Equipment (Touch Screen/Button): Election officials must provide instructions inside each voting booth on how to vote on the equipment.[180]

Polling places must also display a sample ballot outside of the booth.[181]

Voters should also be aware that there is a time limit of 10 minutes for casting their vote within the voting machine booth, and a limit of 5 minutes if other voters are waiting.[182]

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[177] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-573.
[178] *See* Miss. Sec'y of State, *County Elections Handbook* (Rev. 2025), https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/Elections/County%20Election%20Handbook.revised%209.18.2023.pdf.
[179] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-517.
[180] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-531.6(7)(b).
[181] Miss Code Ann. §§ 23-15-511 (sample ballot for polling places using optical-scan ballots), 23-15-531.6(7)(b) (sample ballot for polling places using DRE equipment).
[182] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-551.

For further instruction while voting at the polls on Election Day, voters should contact election officials or the Secretary of State's Office at 800-829-6786.

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, all polling places must be accessible to all voters and ADA-compliant.[183] Every qualified elector is entitled to vote in Mississippi regardless of ability. A voter who has a physical disability that drives or is driven to the polling location, but is unable to enter the polling place may vote through curbside voting. A poll manager will assist the voter outside of the polling location.[184] If a voter reports that a polling place does not have curbside voting, alert the on-call attorney in that jurisdiction.

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, any voter, who affirmatively states to the poll manager(s) that they are blind, has a disability, or is unable to read or write, may receive assistance in marking their ballot in the voting booth, or on the TSX voting machine, from any person of the voter's own choosing.[185] Any person of the voter's own choosing may assist him/her in marking the ballot EXCEPT:

- A candidate whose name is on the ballot,
- The spouse, parent, sibling or child of a candidate whose name is on the ballot,
- A poll watcher who is observing in the polling place on Election Day,
- The voter's employer or a representative of the voter's employer, or
- An officer or agent of the voter's union.

A candidate or the spouse, parent, or child of a candidate may assist the voter if the person is a first-degree relative of the voter.[186]

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, any voter who affirmatively states to the poll manager(s) that they are unable to read or write, may receive assistance in marking their ballot in the voting booth, or on the TSX voting machine, from any person of the voter's own choosing.[187] Any person of the voter's own choosing may assist him/her in marking the ballot EXCEPT:

- A candidate whose name is on the ballot,
- The spouse, parent, sibling or child of a candidate whose name is on the ballot,
- A poll watcher who is observing in the polling place on Election Day,

[183] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-281(2).
[184] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-541(2); Miss. Sec'y of State, *County Elections Handbook*, https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/Elections/County%20Election%20Handbook.revised%209.18.2023.pdf at 51.
[185] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-549.
[186] *Id*.
[187] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-549.

- The voter's employer or a representative of the voter's employer, or
- An officer or agent of the voter's union.

A candidate or the spouse, parent, or child of a candidate may assist the voter if the person is a first-degree relative of the voter.[188]

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

Yes, a voter with a physical disability who drives, or is driven, to the polling place but is unable to enter the polling place may vote curbside on Election Day.[189] The poll managers, at their discretion, will determine that a voter with a physical disability has arrived at the polls in a motor vehicle to vote, and two poll managers shall carry the pollbook, the receipt book, and a ballot or voting device to the motor vehicle.[190]

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

Yes, an individual voter can bring a sample ballot into the polling place for the voter's own use as a reminder of the candidate(s) for whom he/she intends to vote. A voter, however, cannot be permitted to use the sample ballot as campaign literature in attempting to influence other voters within the polling place.[191]

STATE SPECIFIC SUPPLEMENT

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

Voters should contact their County Circuit Clerk's Office or the Secretary of State's Election Hotline: 800-829-6786; Call Center: 601-576-2550; or E-mail: ElectionsAnswers@sos.ms.gov.

83. **GUNS IN POLLING PLACES:** Are voters permitted to carry guns into polling places?

Mississippi licenses to carry concealed handguns do not authorize concealed handguns to be brought into polling places.[192]

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[188] *Id*.
[189] Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-541(2); Miss. Sec'y of State, *County Elections Handbook* at 51 (Rev. 2025), https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/Elections/County%20Election%20Handbook.revised%209.18.2023.pdf.
[190] *Id*.
[191] Miss. Sec'y of State, *County Elections Handbook* at 55 (Rev. 2025), https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/documents/Elections/County%20Election%20Handbook.revised%209.18.2023.pdf.
[192] Miss. Code Ann. § 45-9-101(13).

Mississippi does not regulate the open carrying of firearms. Nonetheless, Mississippi prohibits any person who has or is carrying a deadly weapon from exhibiting the weapon in a threatening manner in the presence of another person.[193]

84. **REGISTERING AND VOTING WITH CONFIDENTIAL ADDRESS:** Can I keep my address confidential when registering to vote or voting on Election Day?

    An individual participating in an established "Address Confidentiality Program" for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking may apply to the Office of the Attorney General to have a substituted designated address to protect the individual's confidential residential location. A voter participating in the Address Confidentiality Program may request that a public body use their substitute address (e.g., on the voter lists).[194]

85. **THE SHIELD ACT:** How will the Safeguard Honesty Integrity in Elections for Lasting Democracy (SHIELD) Act change the voter registration process?

    The SHIELD Act, effective in Mississippi on **July 1, 2026**, requires the registrar to enter voter registration applicants into the Statewide Elections Management System (SEMS). The circuit clerk's office then compares voter registration applications with the Department of Public Safety's (DPS) driver's license and identification information. If the information indicates that the applicant may not be a U.S. citizen, the SEMS notifies the registrar.[195] Then, the registrar will:

    - Enter the applicant's information into U.S. Immigration's SAVE database for further inquiry, and
    - If SAVE indicates that the applicant is not a U.S. citizen, the registrar will send notice to the applicant via mail inquiring whether the applicant is eligible to register to vote.[196]

    The applicant then must provide proof of citizenship to the registrar within 30 days of receiving notice.[197]

    If an applicant does not provide his or her driver's license number on the application and SEMS is not able to retrieve the number from DPS based on the other information provided, the registrar will:

    - Enter the applicant's information into U.S. Immigration's SAVE database for further inquiry; and
    - If SAVE indicates the applicant is not a U.S. citizen, the registrar will send notice to the applicant via mail inquiring whether the applicant is eligible to register to vote.

    The applicant then must provide proof of citizenship to the registrar within 30 days of receiving notice.[198]

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[193] Miss. Code Ann. § 97-37-19.
[194] Miss. Ann. Code § 99-47-1.
[195] https://custom.statenet.com/public/resources.cgi?id=ID:bill:MS2026000S2588&ciq=urn:user:PA186293417&client_md=d6b711f7ee776a4c48e89a55465540e0&mode=current_text.
[196] *Id*.
[197] *Id*.
[198] *Id*.

The applicant can prove citizenship by providing, among other items:

- The applicant's birth certificate or a legible photocopy,
- A U.S. passport, or a legible photocopy of the relevant pages, identifying the applicant and showing the passport number,
- The applicant's U.S. naturalization document, a legible photocopy, or the number of the applicant's Certificate of Naturalization. However, any person who provides the number of their Certificate of Naturalization instead of the naturalization documentation will not be deemed to have provided proof of citizenship until the number is verified with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, or
- Any document or method of proof of citizenship established by the Federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986.

If the applicant provides proof of citizenship and is otherwise qualified, the registrar will register the applicant to vote.[199]

If the applicant does not reply to the notice or provide proof of citizenship, they will be marked "PENDING" in the SEMS. If an applicant is pending, they may cast an affidavit ballot. For the ballot to be counted, the voter must provide proof of citizenship to the registrar within 5 days of casting the ballot.[200]

If the applicant does not respond to the notice or cast an affidavit ballot and provide proof of citizenship during the period beginning when the notice was sent and ending on the day after the date of the second federal general election that occurs after the date of notice, the registrar will mark the applicant "REJECTED" in the SEMS.[201]

Furthermore, the Mississippi Secretary of State will conduct annual checks of the SEMS records with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services SAVE database. The Secretary will then transmit all ineligible matches to the appropriate election commissioner, who will send notice as described above. The individuals who receive notice will then have to provide proof of citizenship or face removal from the system as described above.[202]

[199] *Id*.
[200] *Id*.
[201] *Id*.
[202] *Id*.