



Frequently Asked Questions

Montana – General Elections 2024

Last Updated: 10/16/2024

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

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

REGISTERING TO VOTE

ELECTION DAY

EARLY VOTE

VOTE BY MAIL

ABSENTEE

POLLING PLACE ISSUES

ACCESSIBILITY /ASSISTANCE

STATE SPECIFIC SUPPLEMENT

Table of Contents

REGISTERING TO VOTE

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

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

HOW TO VOTE: ELECTION DAY

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

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

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

HOW TO VOTE: VOTE BY MAIL (In this state, defined as: mail-in absentee ballots)

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

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

HOW TO VOTE: ABSENTEE (In this state, defined as: mail-in or drop-off absentee ballots)

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

POLLING PLACE ISSUES

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

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

ACCESSIBILITY/ASSISTANCE

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

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

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

REGISTERING TO VOTE

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

A person can determine whether they are eligible to register to vote by visiting the Montana Secretary of State's [Vote Montana](#) website.¹

To register to vote in Montana, an individual must:

- Be 18 years old or older on or before the next election;
- Be a U.S. Citizen; and
- Be a Montana resident and a resident of the county in which the individual plans to vote for at least 30 days before the election.²

¹ <https://votemt.gov/>

² Mont. Code Ann. § 13-1-111.

Registration is *not* permitted if an Individual:

- Is a convicted felon currently serving a sentence in a penal institution.
- Is determined by a court of law to be mentally incompetent.³

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?](#)

Montana is an “open primary” state. Each voter privately chooses which ballot they wish to vote for in each primary, and this decision does not register the voter with that party.⁴

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

A voter can determine whether they are registered to vote by checking the Montana Secretary of State’s [Voter Portal](#) website tool,⁵ MyVoterPageMT.com, and inputting their first name, last name, and date of birth.

Note: A registered voter may be placed on the Inactive Voter Registration List if:

- The voter did not vote in a federal general election and did not respond to two confirmation mailings sent by the [county election office](#), or;
- Voter had an absentee mail ballot returned to the county election office as undeliverable and did not respond to a confirmation mailing sent by the county election office.

“Inactive” status will be noted on the voter portal listing for an impacted voter. See [here](#)⁶ for information on the inactive voter list and instructions on how to reactivate voter registration.

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

The Secretary of State’s [Vote Montana](#) website provides detailed information on voter registration.

Eligible persons can register to vote in any of the following ways:

- Visiting their [county election office](#) Monday through Friday 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM to obtain and complete a voter registration application;⁷
- Filling out and signing a voter registration application and dropping it off at their county election office, or mailing it to the [county election administrator](#); or
- Filling out and signing a voter registration application when they apply for or renew their driver’s license or Montana ID.

³ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-1-111.

⁴ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-10-301.

⁵ <https://app.mt.gov/voterinfo/>

⁶ See “Reactivating Your Registration” information on <https://votemt.gov/voter-registration/>

⁷ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-2-201.

The Voter Registration Application form and contact information and mailing addresses for county election administrations is available at [Montana Voter Registration Application](#).⁸

Registrations *cannot* be submitted online. Voters can fill out the online application form, print and sign it, and mail it to their county election administrator. A signed paper application must be submitted for registration. If the voter does not have a printer, they can visit their [county election office](#) to complete a voter registration application or call or email the county election office to request that a form be mailed to them.

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

Applicants must provide one of the following to register to vote:⁹

- Montana Driver’s License or Montana State ID number; or
- If the applicant does not have a Montana Driver's License or ID card, the last 4 digits of their Social Security Number; or
- If the applicant does not have a Montana Driver’s License, Montana State ID, or Social Security number, the applicant must provide one of the following alternate forms of identification:
 - A current and valid photo identification, including but not limited to a school district or postsecondary education photo identification or a Tribal identification, with the individual’s name *OR*
 - at least one of these qualifying items: a current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, government check, or other government document that shows the individual’s name and current address.

Applicants using alternate identification applying in person must present an original version of the identification. Applicants using alternative identification applying by mail must include a readable copy of the required documents with the mailed application.¹⁰

The Secretary of State’s [Voter Identification](#) website lists options for identification for voter registration, and includes instructions and contact information for persons having difficulty obtaining identification.¹¹

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?

Regular registration closes 30 days before the election. The deadline for regular voter registration for the November 5, 2024, general election is October 7, 2024.¹² Registration forms postmarked by this date and received by the county election administrator within 3 days are accepted for regular registration.¹³

⁸ <https://votemt.gov/>

⁹ <https://votemt.gov/voter-identification/>. See Mont. Code Ann. § 13-2-110 (2019 version). Note: Amendments enacted in 2021 to ID requirements *for voting* were [permanently enjoined](#) by a Montana district court in September 2022 (after the Montana Supreme Court [affirmed](#) the district court’s preliminary injunction). The Montana Supreme Court [affirmed the permanent injunction](#) on March 27, 2024, ruling that the challenged amendments violate the Montana Constitution. Although Mont. Code Ann. § 13-2-110 as amended in 2021 was not challenged or ruled on in this litigation, the ID requirements for registration § 13-2-110 as amended in 2021 track the ID requirements for voting struck down as unconstitutional. The Secretary of State lists the pre-2021 ID requirements for voter registration on the [voter registration application](#) and on its [voter ID website](#) information on voter registration.

¹⁰ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-2-110(4)(b).

¹¹ <https://votemt.gov/voter-identification/>

¹² <https://sosmt.gov/elections/calendars/>

¹³ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-2-301.

Late Registration: If a voter misses the regular registration deadline, the voter can still register or change their existing registration, and vote in the election through late registration at their county election office or designated location until noon the day prior to the election. To vote absentee in the election, the voter may be asked to obtain their ballot in person.¹⁴

See [Question 7](#) for information on Election Day (Same Day) registration.

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

Yes. A voter can register or change their voter registration information on election day and vote in that day's election Same Day voter registration must be done in person at local county election offices. Voters in line by 8pm must be served.

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

See table below. The answer to this question depends on whether the voter moved within the same county/election jurisdiction or moved to a new county within Montana.

Moved within the same precinct	Moved to a different precinct but within the same county	Moved to a different county
The voter should go to the polling place for that precinct.	The voter is entitled to cast a regular vote at the polling place or an absentee ballot in the precinct where the voter is registered. The voter may only do this for the first election after their move. When voting, the voter must state their new address, and must complete a new registration form to make the necessary correction before being allowed to vote in a polling place election or by absentee or mail ballot. ¹⁵	The voter must register in the new county of residence in order to vote. However, a voter who moved to a different county 30 days or less before an election may: (i) vote in person or by absentee ballot in the precinct and county where previously registered; or (ii) update their voter's registration information and vote in their new county of residence. ¹⁶

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

See the "Moved to a different county" column in the table above.

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?](#)

If the voter is a student attending college in another county within Montana, they can:

¹⁴ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-2-304.

¹⁵ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-2-512.

¹⁶ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-2-514.

- choose to vote in their county of permanent residence, either in person at the polls or by absentee ballot; or
- register in the county where they are going to college and vote in that county.

If the voter is an out-of-state student attending school in Montana and has lived in Montana for at least 30 days, the voter may either:

- become a Montana resident and vote in the county where they are attending school; or
- vote in their original state.

If the voter is a Montana resident attending school out-of-state and wishes to vote in the Montana elections, they may register to vote and vote either in person at the polls in the county of permanent residence in Montana or by absentee ballot.

If the voter is a student attending college out-of-state and wishes to vote in the state where the voter is attending college, they must consult the voter registration laws in that state to determine how to register to vote in the state (and should deregister as a voter in Montana by writing to the voter's county election office for the county in which they were registered in Montana).

No person may register and vote in two states.

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

The Montana Secretary of State's website includes a [Military & Overseas Voters](#) information page.¹⁷

The Military and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)¹⁸ covers the following voters:

- members of the Uniformed Services or Merchant Marine on active duty;
- spouses and dependents of a member of the Uniformed Services or Merchant Marine on active duty;
- U.S. citizens residing outside the U.S.; and
- other individuals included in the definition of "absent uniformed services voter" and "overseas voter" under Montana law.¹⁹

UOCAVA voters already registered to vote in Montana may apply for a military-overseas ballot by:

- using a regular absentee ballot application for the voter's jurisdiction;
- using a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA);
- making a written request, which must include the voter's birth date and signature; or
- making an electronic request that includes the voter's birth date and affirmation of the voter's eligibility to vote under the Montana Absent Uniformed and Overseas Voters Act.²⁰

UOCAVA voters who are not yet registered may use a FPCA to simultaneously register to vote and request a military-overseas ballot.

¹⁷ <https://sosmt.gov/elections/military-overseas/>

¹⁸ Mont. Code Ann. Title 13 Chapter 21 (§ 13-21-101 - § 13-21-228)

¹⁹ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-21-102.

²⁰ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-21-222.

The FPCA and related information, including deadlines, can be found on the [Federal Voting Assistance Program Montana page](#).²¹

FPCAs may be completed and submitted online with the Secretary of State's Electronic Absentee System (EAS). *The EAS is available 45 days before federal elections through 8:00 PM on Election Day.* FPCAs can also be returned to the voter's county election office via email, fax and mail.

12. CRIMINAL CONVICTION: [I have a felony criminal conviction. Can I register to vote? Does the type of conviction matter? Are there any restrictions after any misdemeanor convictions?](#)

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

If a person is incarcerated but has not yet been convicted, they are still eligible to register and vote, even if the voter has been charged with a felony. Misdemeanors do not restrict voting rights.

A person convicted of a felony does not have a right to vote while the person is serving the felony sentence in a penal institution.²²

Once released, convicted felons are again eligible to register and vote. Persons can vote if on probation or parole. Once released from the penal institution, persons should re-register to vote. This is because Montana law allows a person incarcerated for a felony to be removed from the list of registered voters.²³

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

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

A person convicted of a felony does not have a right to vote while the person is serving the felony sentence in a penal institution.²⁴ Misdemeanors do not restrict voting rights.

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

In response to a challenge, the challenged voter may fill out and sign an affidavit to refute the challenge and swear that the voter is eligible to vote. If the challenge was not made in the presence of the challenged voter, the election administrator or election judge shall notify the challenged voter of who made the challenge and the grounds of the challenge and explain what information the voter may provide to respond to the challenge. The notification must be made:

- within 5 days of the filing of the challenge if the election is more than 5 days away; or
- on or before election day if the election is less than 5 days away.

The election administrator or, on election day, the election judge shall also provide to the challenged voter a copy of the challenger's affidavit and any supporting evidence provided.²⁵

A voter's right to vote may be challenged at any time by any registered voter by the challenger filling out and signing an affidavit stating the grounds and providing supporting evidence of the challenge to the

²¹ <https://www.fvap.gov/montana>

²² Mont. Code Ann. § 13-1-111(2).

²³ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-2-402(4).

²⁴ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-1-111(2).

²⁵ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-301.

election administrator or, on election day, to an election judge. A challenge may be made on the grounds that a voter:

- is of unsound mind, as determined by a court;
- has voted before in that election;
- has been convicted of a felony and is serving a sentence in a penal institution;
- is not registered as required by law;
- is not 18 years of age or older;
- has not been, for at least 30 days, a resident of the county in which the elector is offering to vote (unless Moved to a County in [Question 8](#) applies);
- is a provisionally registered elector whose status has not been changed to a legally registered voter; or
- does not meet another requirement provided in the constitution or by law.²⁶

Unless the election administrator determines without the need for further information that the challenge is insufficient:

- prior to the close of registration, the election administrator shall question the challenger and the challenged voter and may question other persons to determine whether the challenge is sufficient or insufficient to cancel the voter's registration; or
- after the close of regular registration, the election administrator or, on election day, either the election administrator or an election judge shall allow the challenged voter to cast a provisional paper ballot.²⁷

HOW TO VOTE: ELECTION DAY

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

Polling places must be open between the hours of 7:00 AM and 8:00 PM on Election Day. However, there is an exception for a polling place with fewer than 400 registered voters, which must be open from at least noon to the earlier of 8:00 PM or until all registered voters in any precinct have voted, at which time that precinct must close immediately.²⁸

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

The voter can find their polling place at the Montana Secretary of State's "My Voter Page" website ([Voter Portal \(mt.gov\)](#)).

If a voter has moved recently and has not updated their voter registration, refer to the below chart:

Moved within the same precinct	Moved to a different precinct but within the same county	Moved to a different county
---------------------------------------	---	------------------------------------

²⁶ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-301(2).

²⁷ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-301(3).

²⁸ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-1-106.

The voter should go to the polling place for that precinct.	The voter is entitled to cast a regular vote at the polling place or an absentee ballot in the precinct where the voter is registered. The voter may only do this for the first election after their move. When voting, the voter must state their new address, and must complete a new registration form to make the necessary correction before being allowed to vote in a polling place election or by absentee or mail ballot. ²⁹	The voter must register in the new county of residence in order to vote. However, a voter who moved to a different county 30 days or less before an election may: (i) vote in person or by absentee ballot in the precinct and county where previously registered; or (ii) update their voter's registration information and vote in their new county of residence. ³⁰
---	--	---

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

No. Employers are not required to provide time off to vote in Montana.

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

As long as the voter is in line by 8:00 PM, they must be allowed to vote.

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

When voting, the election judge will request the voter's identification and verify that it is an acceptable form of identification. The following are acceptable forms of identification:³¹

- Photo identification showing voter's name
 - Valid Montana Driver's License
 - Montana State Identification Card
 - Military ID
 - Tribal ID³²
 - U.S. Passport
 - Montana Concealed Carry Permit
 - School District or Postsecondary Education Photo ID
- If the voter does not present photo identification, the voter shall present a current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, notice of confirmation of voter registration issued pursuant to §

²⁹ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-2-512.

³⁰ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-2-514.

³¹ <https://votemt.gov/voter-identification/>. See Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-114(1)(a) (2019 version). Note: Certain amendments to § 13-13-114(1)(a) enacted in 2021 were [permanently enjoined](#) by a Montana district court in September 2022 (after the Montana Supreme Court [affirmed](#) the district court's preliminary injunction). The Montana Supreme Court [affirmed the permanent injunction](#) on March 27, 2024, ruling that the challenged amendments violate the Montana Constitution.

³² Not all official Tribal ID's in Montana have photos. In practice, Election Offices have agreed to accept all Tribal IDs, including those without photos.

13-2-207, government check, or other government document that shows the elector's name and current address.

The Secretary of State's [Voter Identification](#) website lists options for identification to vote, and includes instructions and contact information for persons having difficulty obtaining identification.³³

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

Yes, a voter whose name appears on the precinct register but who does not provide a required form of identification can cast a provisional ballot.³⁴ Even if the information provided by the voter differs from the information in the precinct register a voter will be allowed to sign the precinct register, complete a new registration form and vote if the election official determines that the information sufficiently verifies the voter's identity.³⁵ Alternatively, the voter can cast a provisional ballot, but this should be a last resort.

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

If the registered voter's name does not appear in the precinct register book and the voter's eligibility to vote cannot otherwise be established by presenting the identification required to register (see [Question 5](#), above), the voter is entitled to cast a provisional ballot.³⁶ However, casting a provisional ballot is a last resort, and before doing so the voter should attempt to determine whether they are in fact voting in the correct precinct and why their name is missing from the precinct register book. A provisional ballot is only counted when cast at the precinct in which the voter is registered.³⁷

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

Voters are given provisional ballots, or ballots requiring additional steps or information before they can be counted, under the following circumstances:³⁸

- Voter's name is not in the precinct register.
- The precinct register indicates that the voter is provisionally registered, which was not resolved.
- Voter has claimed registration with the Motor Vehicle Division or other government agency, which could not be immediately confirmed.
- Voter has sworn or affirmed that they are eligible to vote due to losing, spoiling, not receiving, not returning, or destroying your absentee ballot.
- Voter's absentee ballot signature envelope was not signed, or the signature could not be verified.
- Voter's right to vote is challenged.
- Voter's identification is insufficient and/or did not include one of the valid forms of identification.
- Voter failed to sign the register.
- Voter is a late registrant who voted provisionally.

³³ <https://votemt.gov/voter-identification/>

³⁴ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-114(2).

³⁵ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-114(1)(c).

³⁶ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-114(2)

³⁷ Mont. Code Ann. §§ 13-15-107(3); 13-13-114.

³⁸ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-114(2),(3).

Before the voter is issued a provisional ballot, the election official should inform the voter why the provisional ballot is being issued and what additional information or documentation, if any, the voter needs to provide in order for the vote to be counted.³⁹ For the form that is to be provided when a voter is given a provision ballot, see [Provisional Ballot Instructions](#).⁴⁰ A voter who is issued and completes a provisional ballot will have until 5 p.m. the day after election day to resolve their provisional ballot.

See [Question 24](#) for additional information on next steps.

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

Yes, a provisional ballot may be obtained, if the voter has no ID or their provided ID is insufficient.⁴¹

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

Before the voter is issued a provisional ballot, the election official should inform the voter why the provisional ballot is being issued and what additional information or documentation, if any, the voter needs to provide in order for the vote to be counted.⁴² For the form that is to be provided when a voter is given a provision ballot, see [Provisional Ballot Instructions](#).⁴³ A voter who is issued and completes a provisional ballot will have until 5 p.m. the day after election day to resolve their provisional ballot.

For a provisional ballot to be counted, the voter has until 5:00 PM the day after Election Day to provide valid ID or eligibility information either in person, by facsimile, by electronic means, or by mail postmarked no later than the day after Election Day. A provisional ballot cast due to insufficient identification must be counted if the signature on the voter's affirmation and the signature on their registration form match. A provisional ballot must also be counted if the election administrator verifies the voter's identity or eligibility. However, if the signatures do not match or the voter fails to provide valid identification by the deadline then the ballot will be rejected. Provisional ballots cast by voters whose eligibility is not determined by the end of Election Day may not be counted until 3:00 PM on the sixth day after Election Day.⁴⁴

The county election administrator must notify each voter who casts a provisional ballot, by the most expedient means possible, whether or not the voter's vote was counted, and the reason(s) why or why not.⁴⁵

³⁹ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-601.

⁴⁰ https://sosmt.gov/wpfd_file/provisional-ballot-instructions/

⁴¹ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-114(2).

⁴² Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-601.

⁴³ https://sosmt.gov/wpfd_file/provisional-ballot-instructions/

⁴⁴ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-15-107.

⁴⁵ Mont. Admin. R. § 44.3.2115(2).

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)?

Montana does not have “true” early voting, but any registered voter may go to their [county election office](#) and request, obtain, and vote by an absentee ballot in-person.⁴⁶

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

In person absentee voting does not require a reason and starts as soon as ballots are available (no later than 30 days prior to an election).⁴⁷

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

A voter can vote absentee in person beginning 30 days prior to election day until 12 noon the day before the election.⁴⁸

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

Absentee ballots can be obtained in person at your [county election office](#), or alternative locations as designed by your county election administrator.

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

See [Question 36](#), below.

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

If the voter is disabled, they may have their designated agent assist in filling out their ballot.⁴⁹ However, if the voter does not have an agent, they must be declared under oath, which must be administered by an election judge, as disabled.⁵⁰ Once declared disabled, the voter may be assisted by two election judges, who are appointed by the chief election judge, to mark the ballot and sign their name by the voter's name to show that they assisted the voter.⁵¹

⁴⁶ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-222.

⁴⁷ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-205(a)(i).

⁴⁸ Mont. Code Ann. §§ 13-13-205, 13-13-211.

⁴⁹ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-119(1), (2).

⁵⁰ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-119(2)(a).

⁵¹ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-119(2)(a).

Montana's Statewide Elections have various options for voters with disabilities or voters who need special assistance, including the new Electronic Ballot Request System, available for state and federal elections beginning 30 days before election day and through noon the day before election day.

For more information, please see [Accessibility/Access Section](#), below, beginning with [Question 76](#) and the Secretary of State's information page on [Voters with Disabilities](#).⁵²

HOW TO VOTE: VOTE BY MAIL

(in this state defined as: voting by absentee ballot)

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

All voters who are registered on the permanent absentee list or who request an absentee ballot by October 7th will be automatically sent their absentee ballot by mail on October 11th. Voters not already registered absentee who want an absentee ballot will need to complete an Application for Absentee Ballot from the Secretary of State website – available [here](#) or from the voter's [county election administrator](#) – and mail it to or drop it off at their county election office before noon on the day before election day. New absentee registrants or those who request an absentee ballot after October 7th may be mailed their absentee ballot, or asked to pick it up at their local county election office at the election office's discretion.

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

No. Any registered or provisionally registered voter may vote using an absentee ballot.⁵³

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

Absentee ballots can be requested up until 12 noon the day before Election Day. An application for an absentee ballot must be received by the county elections administrator before noon on the day before the election unless the voter suddenly becomes ill or has a health emergency (see [Question 38](#)).⁵⁴

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

The voter may designate another person to pick up their absentee ballot on their behalf by completing the required section of the [application for absentee ballot](#).

⁵² <https://sosmt.gov/elections/disabilities/>

⁵³ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-201(1). Note: Persons who will turn 18 on or before the next election day are eligible, after registering to vote, to request and receive an absentee ballot. Mont. Code Ann. § 13-2-205(2), which was added in 2021, prohibited this practice but was [permanently enjoined](#) by a Montana district court in September 2022 (after the Montana Supreme Court [affirmed](#) the district court's preliminary injunction). The Montana Supreme Court [affirmed the permanent injunction](#) in March 2024, ruling that the provision violates the Montana Constitution when applied to deny absentee ballots to persons who will turn 18 by the next election day.

⁵⁴ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-211.

A person who holds a power of attorney from a uniformed-service voter may apply for an absentee ballot for that election on behalf of the uniformed-service voter. The applicant shall provide a copy of the power of attorney authorizing the request for an absentee ballot along with the application.⁵⁵

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?

Absentee ballots can be requested up until 12 noon the day before Election Day. The application for an absentee ballot must be received by the election administrator of the applicant's county of residence before noon on the day before Election Day.⁵⁶

Voters can return their absentee ballots by mail or drop them off in-person at county election offices or locations designated by each election office.

Ballot collection is a lawful activity in Montana. Individuals and organizers can assist voters by picking up and delivering voted, sealed absentee ballots to the county election office. The previous Montana laws that placed restrictions on returning an absentee ballot on behalf of another person were ruled unconstitutional and invalidated in 2020 and 2024. There is no limit on how many completed absentee ballots an individual can collect and deliver to a county election office."

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

Identification when returning the absentee ballot is *required only for provisionally registered voters*.

If a voter is provisionally registered and requests an absentee ballot, they will receive a [Provisionally Registered Elector Identification Form](#) with their absentee ballot. The voter will need to complete the form and include the completed form within the outer signature envelope along with the voted ballot in the secrecy envelope when they return their absentee ballot.

The ID requirements are the same as for voter registration listed in [Question 5](#):

- Montana Driver's License or Montana State ID number; or
- If the applicants does not have a Montana Driver's License or ID card, the last 4 digits of their Social Security Number; or
- If the applicant does not have a Montana Driver's License, Montana State ID, or Social Security number, the applicant must provide one of the following alternate forms of identification:
 - A current and valid photo identification, including but not limited to a school district or postsecondary education photo identification or a Tribal identification, with the individual's name *OR*
 - at least one of these qualifying items: a current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, government check, or other government document that shows the individual's name and current address.

⁵⁵ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-212(1)(b).

⁵⁶ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-211(1).

Applicants using alternate identification must include a readable copy of the required documents with the completed Provisionally Registered Elector Identification form.⁵⁷

If a *provisionally registered voter* does not provide information from one of these categories, their ballot will be handled as a provisional ballot.⁵⁸ See [Questions 22 - 24](#), above.

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

The ballot can be sent to a mailing address designated by the voter.

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

If the voter has not requested their absentee ballot by 12:00 PM the day before Election Day, they must vote in person.

However, if the voter suddenly becomes ill or has a health emergency that occurs between 5:00 PM of the Friday before the election and before the polls close on election day, they may ask their county election administrator to have a special absentee election board member bring an absentee ballot to them.⁵⁹ A registered voter may request by phone, facsimile transmission or by other means, to have a ballot and application personally delivered to the voter's place of confinement, hospitalization or residence within the county.⁶⁰

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

Voters can check the status of their voter registration, absentee ballot application, and absentee ballot return at the Montana Secretary of State's [Voter Portal](#).⁶¹

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 be given notice as soon as possible, by the election administrator, that there is a problem with their absentee ballot. Upon receiving such notice and before 8:00 PM on Election Day, such voter may either:

⁵⁷ See Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-602(1) (2019 version). Note: Amendments enacted in 2021 to ID requirements *for voting* were [permanently enjoined](#) by a Montana district court in September 2022 (after the Montana Supreme Court [affirmed](#) the district court's preliminary injunction). The Montana Supreme Court [affirmed the permanent injunction](#) on March 27, 2024, ruling that the challenged amendments violate the Montana Constitution. Although ID requirements for voter registration and Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-602(1) as amended in 2021 were not challenged or ruled on in this litigation, the ID requirements for registration as amended in 2021 track the ID requirements for voting struck down as unconstitutional. The Secretary of State lists the pre-2021 ID requirements for voter registration on its [voter ID website](#) list of acceptable ID for voter registration and its [Provisionally Registered Elector Identification Form](#).

⁵⁸ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-602(2).

⁵⁹ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-211.

⁶⁰ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-212(2)(b).

⁶¹ <https://prodvoterportal.mt.gov/WhereToVote.aspx>

- resolve the issue, confirm validity of the ballot (which typically includes the following examples for needed corrections: confirm the validity of the ballot, or verify the elector's or agent's signature or provide a signature, after proof of identification, by affirming that the signature is in fact the elector's, by completing a new registration form containing the elector's current signature, or by providing a new agent designation form);⁶² or
- request and receive a replacement ballot.⁶³

Rejected ballots that are not cured by 8pm on Election Day become provisional ballots that then can be cured by 5pm on the following day, November 6th.

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

Instructions for completing and returning the absentee ballot will be included in the absentee ballot packet the voter receives.⁶⁴ The voter will need to sign the affirmation on the return envelope. Instructions are also available [here](#).⁶⁵

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

Yes, if the voter is disabled, they may have their designated agent assist in filling out their ballot.⁶⁶ However, if the voter does not have an agent, they must be declared under oath, which must be administered by an election judge, as disabled.⁶⁷ Once declared disabled, the voter may be assisted by two election judges, who are appointed by the chief election judge, to mark the ballot and sign their name by the voter's name to show that they assisted the voter.⁶⁸

Montana's Statewide Elections have various options for voters with disabilities or voters who need special assistance, including the new Electronic Ballot Request System, available for state and federal elections beginning 30 days before election day and through noon the day before election day. For more information, please see [Accessibility/Access Section](#), below, beginning with [Question 76](#) and the Secretary of State's information page on [Voters with Disabilities](#).⁶⁹

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?

Ballots can be mailed or returned in person, but must be *received* prior to 8:00 PM on Election Day. In-person drop offs of ballots can be made in person, to a county election office, a polling place within the elector's county, or any place designated by the county election administrator.⁷⁰

Ballot collection is a lawful activity in Montana. Individuals and organizers can assist voters by picking up and delivering voted, sealed absentee ballots to the county election office. The previous Montana laws that placed restrictions on returning an absentee ballot on behalf of another person were ruled

⁶² Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-245(2)(a).

⁶³ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-204(2)(a).

⁶⁴ <https://sosmt.gov/elections/absentee/>

⁶⁵ <https://sosmt.gov/wp-content/uploads/attachments/Absentee-Voting-Instructions.pdf?dt=1519325225636>

⁶⁶ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-119(1), (2).

⁶⁷ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-119(2)(a).

⁶⁸ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-119(2)(a).

⁶⁹ <https://sosmt.gov/elections/disabilities/>

⁷⁰ Mont. Code Ann. §§ 13-19-306, 13-19-307.

unconstitutional and invalidated in 2020 and 2024. There is no limit on how many completed absentee ballots an individual can collect and deliver to a county election office.”

Postmark is not relevant.

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

In-person drop offs of ballots can be made in person, to a county election office, a polling place within the elector’s county, or any place designated by the county election administrator for submission of absentee ballots.⁷¹

A list of election offices where voters may drop off completed absentee ballots can be found [here](#).

Note: The mailing address listings for several election offices are P.O. Boxes. The voter can contact the Administrator by phone or email to confirm the physical drop-off location.

45. ASSISTANCE DROPPING OFF BALLOT: [Can someone else drop off my completed ballot for me?](#)

Ballot collection is a lawful activity in Montana. Individuals and organizers can assist voters by picking up and delivering voted, sealed absentee ballots to the county election office. There is no limit on how many completed absentee ballots an individual can collect and deliver to a county election office.”

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

A voter may request a replacement ballot if their ballot is lost, spoiled, destroyed, or not received by the voter.⁷² Alternatively, the voter may go to their appropriate polling place on Election Day and vote in person after being issued a provisional ballot.⁷³

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

A voter may request a replacement ballot if their ballot is not received by the voter.⁷⁴ Alternatively, the voter may go to their appropriate polling place on Election Day and vote in person after being issued a provisional ballot.⁷⁵

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, the voter will be allowed to cast a provisional ballot in person.⁷⁶

⁷¹ Mont. Code Ann. §§ 13-19-306, 13-19-307.

⁷² Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-204(2)(a).

⁷³ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-204(2)(b).

⁷⁴ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-204(2)(a).

⁷⁵ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-204(2)(b).

⁷⁶ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-204.

HOW TO VOTE: ABSENTEE

(in this state defined as: voting by absentee ballot)

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

Any registered or provisionally registered voter may vote using an absentee ballot.⁷⁷ No specific reason is needed.

See [Voting by Absentee Ballot](#) for more information on voting by absentee ballot.⁷⁸

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

Absentee ballots can be requested up until 12 noon the day before Election Day. An application for an absentee ballot must be received by the county elections administrator before noon on the day before the election unless the voter suddenly becomes ill or has a health emergency (see [Question 52](#)).⁷⁹

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

Identification when returning the absentee ballot is *required only for provisionally registered voters*.

If a voter is provisionally registered and requests an absentee ballot, they will receive a [Provisionally Registered Elector Identification Form](#) with their absentee ballot. The voter will need to complete the form and include the completed form within the outer signature envelope along with the voted ballot in the secrecy envelope when they return their absentee ballot.

The ID requirements are the same as for voter registration listed in [Question 5](#):

- Montana Driver's License or Montana State ID number; or
- If the applicants does not have a Montana Driver's License or ID card, the last 4 digits of their Social Security Number; or
- If the applicant does not have a Montana Driver's License, Montana State ID, or Social Security number, the applicant must provide one of the following alternate forms of identification:
 - A current and valid photo identification, including but not limited to a school district or postsecondary education photo identification or a Tribal identification, with the individual's name *OR*

⁷⁷ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-201(1). Note: Persons who will turn 18 on or before the next election day are eligible, after registering to vote, to request and receive an absentee ballot. Mont. Code Ann. § 13-2-205(2), which was added in 2021, prohibited this practice but was [permanently enjoined](#) by a Montana district court in September 2022 (after the Montana Supreme Court [affirmed](#) the district court's preliminary injunction). The Montana Supreme Court [affirmed the permanent injunction](#) in March 2024, ruling that the provision violates the Montana Constitution when applied to deny absentee ballots to persons who will turn 18 by the next election day.

⁷⁸ <https://sosmt.gov/elections/absentee/>

⁷⁹ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-211.

- at least one of these qualifying items: a current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, government check, or other government document that shows the individual's name and current address.

Applicants using alternate identification must include a readable copy of the required documents with the completed Provisionally Registered Elector Identification form.⁸⁰

If a *provisionally registered voter* does not provide information from one of these categories, their ballot will be handled as a provisional ballot.⁸¹ See [Questions 22 - 24](#), above.

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

If the voter suddenly becomes ill or has a health emergency that occurs between 5:00 PM of the Friday before the election and before the polls close on election day, they may ask their county election administrator to have a special absentee election board member bring an absentee ballot to them.⁸² A registered voter may request by phone, facsimile transmission or by other means, to have a ballot and application personally delivered to the voter's place of confinement, hospitalization or residence within the county.⁸³

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

Absentee ballots can be requested up until 12 noon the day before Election Day. The application for an absentee ballot must be received by the election administrator of the applicant's county of residence before noon on the day before Election Day.⁸⁴

Voters can return their absentee ballots by mail or drop them off in-person.

Ballot collection is a lawful activity in Montana. Individuals and organizers can assist voters by picking up and delivering voted, sealed absentee ballots to the county election office. There is no limit on how many completed absentee ballots an individual can collect and deliver to a county election office.

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

⁸⁰ See Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-602(1) (2019 version). Note: Amendments enacted in 2021 to ID requirements *for voting* were [permanently enjoined](#) by a Montana district court in September 2022 (after the Montana Supreme Court [affirmed](#) the district court's preliminary injunction). The Montana Supreme Court [affirmed the permanent injunction](#) on March 27, 2024, ruling that the challenged amendments violate the Montana Constitution. Although ID requirements for voter registration and Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-602(1) as amended in 2021 were not challenged or ruled on in this litigation, the ID requirements for registration as amended in 2021 track the ID requirements for voting struck down as unconstitutional. The Secretary of State lists the pre-2021 ID requirements for voter registration on its [voter ID website](#) list of acceptable ID for voter registration and its [Provisionally Registered Elector Identification Form](#).

⁸¹ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-602(2).

⁸² Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-211.

⁸³ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-212(2)(b).

⁸⁴ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-211(1).

Voters can check the status of their voter registration, absentee ballot application, and absentee ballot return at the Montana Secretary of State's [Voter Portal](#).⁸⁵

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 be given notice as soon as possible, by the election administrator, that there is a problem with their absentee ballot. Upon receiving such notice and before 8:00 PM on Election Day, such voter may either:

- resolve the issue, confirm validity of the ballot, etc. (which typically includes the following examples for needed corrections: confirm the validity of the ballot, or verify the elector's or agent's signature or provide a signature, after proof of identification, by affirming that the signature is in fact the elector's, by completing a new registration form containing the elector's current signature, or by providing a new agent designation form),⁸⁶ or
- request and receive a replacement ballot.⁸⁷

Rejected ballots that are not cured by 8pm on Election Day become provisional ballots that then can be cured by 5pm on the following day, November 6th.

Voters can confirm the status of their application or ballot by using the state's [Voter Portal](#) lookup tool.⁸⁸

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

Instructions for completing and returning the absentee ballot will be included in the absentee ballot packet the voter receives.⁸⁹ The voter will need to sign the affirmation on the return envelope. Instructions are also available [here](#).⁹⁰

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

Yes, if the voter is disabled, they may have their designated agent assist in filling out their ballot.⁹¹ However, if the voter does not have an agent, they must be declared under oath, which must be administered by an election judge, as disabled.⁹² Once declared disabled, the voter may be assisted by two election judges, who are appointed by the chief election judge, to mark the ballot and sign their name by the voter's name to show that they assisted the voter.⁹³

Montana's Statewide Elections have various options for voters with disabilities or voters who need special assistance, including the new Electronic Ballot Request System, available for state and federal elections beginning 30 days before election day and through noon the day before election day. For more

⁸⁵ <https://prodvoterportal.mt.gov/WhereToVote.aspx>

⁸⁶ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-245(2)(a).

⁸⁷ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-204(2)(a).

⁸⁸ <https://app.mt.gov/voterinfo/>

⁸⁹ <https://sosmt.gov/elections/absentee/>

⁹⁰ <https://sosmt.gov/wp-content/uploads/attachments/Absentee-Voting-Instructions.pdf?dt=1519325225636>

⁹¹ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-119(1), (2).

⁹² Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-119(2)(a).

⁹³ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-119(2)(a).

information, please see [Accessibility/Access Section](#), below, beginning with [Question 76](#) and the Secretary of State's information page on [Voters with Disabilities](#).⁹⁴

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

Ballots can be mailed or returned in person, but must be *received* prior to 8:00 PM on Election Day. In-person drop offs of ballots can be made in person, to a county election office, a polling place within the elector's county, or any place designated by the county election administrator for submission of absentee ballots.⁹⁵

Postmark is not relevant.

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

In-person drop offs of ballots can be made in person, to a county election office, a polling place within the elector's county, or any place designated by the county election administrator for submission of absentee ballots.⁹⁶

A list of election offices where voters may drop off completed absentee ballots can be found [here](#). Note: The mailing address listings for several election offices are P.O. Boxes. The voter can contact the Administrator by phone or email to confirm the physical drop-off location.

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

Ballot collection is a lawful activity in Montana. Individuals and organizers can assist voters by picking up and delivering voted, sealed absentee ballots to the county election office. The previous Montana laws that placed restrictions on returning an absentee ballot on behalf of another person were ruled unconstitutional and invalidated in 2020 and 2024. There is no limit on how many completed absentee ballots an individual can collect and deliver to a county election office.

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

A voter may request a replacement ballot if their ballot is lost, spoiled, destroyed, or not received by the voter.⁹⁷ Alternatively, the voter may go to their appropriate polling place on Election Day and vote in person after being issued a provisional ballot.⁹⁸

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

⁹⁴ <https://sosmt.gov/elections/disabilities/>

⁹⁵ Mont. Code Ann. §§ 13-19-306, 13-19-307.

⁹⁶ Mont. Code Ann. §§ 13-19-306, 13-19-307.

⁹⁷ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-204(2)(a).

⁹⁸ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-204(2)(b).

A voter may request a replacement ballot if their ballot is not received by the voter.⁹⁹ Alternatively, the voter may go to their appropriate polling place on Election Day and vote in person after being issued a provisional ballot.¹⁰⁰

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

As long as the voter has not already submitted the absentee ballot, the voter will be allowed to cast a provisional ballot.¹⁰¹

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

Absentee ballots can be obtained in person at your [county election office](#),¹⁰² or alternative locations as designed by your county election administrator. A voter can vote absentee in person beginning 30 days prior to election day until 12 noon the day before the election.¹⁰³

POLLING PLACE ISSUES

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

The majority of polling places must be open from 7:00AM to 8:00PM.

A polling place having fewer than 400 registered electors who intend to vote at the polling place must be open from at least noon to 8 p.m. or until all registered electors in any precinct have voted, at which time that precinct in the polling place must be closed immediately.¹⁰⁴

If the polling place is not open at 7:00 AM, try contacting an election official. Contact information for election offices and officials can be found [here](#).

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?

Try to contact an election official onsite or at the county elections office. Contact information for election offices and officials can be found [here](#).

As long as the voter is in line by 8:00 PM, they must be allowed to vote.

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

⁹⁹ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-204(2)(a).

¹⁰⁰ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-204(2)(b).

¹⁰¹ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-204.

¹⁰² Mont. Code Ann. § 13-2-201.

¹⁰³ Mont. Code Ann. §§ 13-13-205, 13-13-211.

¹⁰⁴ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-1-106.

Montana law does not have specific rules regarding malfunctioning voting equipment.¹⁰⁵ Voters should immediately notify the election officers if the voting equipment breaks down while the polls are open. Additionally, a voter should ask if an emergency paper ballot is available.

Remember, a voter can use an emergency paper ballot, and should request one if it is not offered.

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

Montana law prohibits campaigning or electioneering on Election Day within any polling place or within 100 feet of any entrance to the building in which the polling place is located. In this context, campaigning or electioneering means aiding or promoting the success or defeat of any candidate or issue to be voted upon at the election.¹⁰⁶ Offering or distributing food, drink, alcohol, tobacco, or anything of value by a candidate, a candidate’s family member, or a worker or volunteer for a candidate’s campaign is similarly prohibited.¹⁰⁷ A person may not buy, sell, give, wear, or display at or about the polls on Election Day any badge, button, or other insignia designed or which tends to aid or promote the success or defeat of any candidate or ballot issue to be voted upon in the election.¹⁰⁸ A person within a polling place or any building in which an election is being held may not solicit from a voter, before or after the voter has marked a ballot and returned it to an election judge, information as to whether the voter intends to vote or has voted for or against a candidate or ballot issue.¹⁰⁹

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

A person may not buy, sell, give, wear, or display at or about the polls on Election day any badge, button or other insignia which is designed or tends to aid or promote the success or defeat of any candidate or ballot issue to be voted upon.¹¹⁰

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

A poll worker may not buy, sell, give, wear, or display at or about the polls on Election day any badge, button or other insignia which is designed or tends to aid or promote the success or defeat of any candidate or ballot issue to be voted upon.¹¹¹

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?

¹⁰⁵ See Mont. Code Ann. § 13-17-101 et seq.; Mont. Admin. R. § 44.3.1701 et seq. (containing provisions for voting systems but not malfunctioning voting equipment).

¹⁰⁶ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-35-211.

¹⁰⁷ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-35-211(2).

¹⁰⁸ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-35-211.

¹⁰⁹ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-35-211.

¹¹⁰ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-35-211.

¹¹¹ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-35-211.

A person cannot directly or indirectly attempt to prevent a voter from voting for any candidate, the ticket of any political party, or any ballot issue. All persons are prohibited from using or threatening to use any force, coercion, violence, restraint, temporal or spiritual injury, or undue influence against any voter.¹¹²

A person may not impede or prevent the free exercise of the franchise by any voter at any election, nor can any person in any manner, interfere with a voter lawfully exercising their right to vote. A person on election day may not obstruct the doors or entries of any polling place or engage in any solicitation of a voter within the room where votes are being cast or elsewhere in any manner that in any way interferes with the election process or obstructs the access of voters to or from the polling place.¹¹³

Further, A person may not knowingly or purposely, directly or indirectly, individually or through any other person, for any election, in order to induce any elector to vote or refrain from voting or to vote for or against any particular candidate, political party ticket, or ballot issue give, lend, agree to give or lend, offer, or promise any money, liquor, or valuable consideration or promise or endeavor to procure any money, liquor, or valuable consideration.¹¹⁴

If a voter feels unsafe or uncomfortable outside the polling place, the voter should contact an election official.

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

A voter's right to vote may be challenged at any time by any registered voter. The challenging voter must fill out and sign an affidavit stating the grounds of the challenge and providing evidence in support to the election administrator or, on election day, to an election judge. If the voter's registration is challenged, they may fill out and sign an affidavit refuting the challenge. If the voter was not present when the challenge was made, the voter must be notified of who made the challenge and its grounds, and must be given an explanation as to what information may be provided to respond. The voter must also be provided a copy of the challenger's affidavit and any supporting evidence.¹¹⁵

If a person's right to vote is challenged prior to the close of voting registration, the election administrator must question both the voter and the individual making the challenge and may question others to determine whether the challenge is sufficient or not. If the challenge is made after registration is closed or on Election Day, the voter may cast a provisional ballot.¹¹⁶ See [Question 75](#) below for information on provisional ballots.

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

There is no specific provision in Montana election law prescribing for police or members of the military at a polling place. However, the intimidation provisions outlined in [Question 71](#) apply to all people, regardless of whether they are in the military or are sworn officers.

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

¹¹² Mont. Code Ann. § 13-35-218.

¹¹³ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-35-218.

¹¹⁴ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-35-214.

¹¹⁵ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-301.

¹¹⁶ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-301(3).

It may have been removed. However, a voter's name may only be removed from the list of registered voters if:

- the voter submits a written request for cancellation;
- the voter dies;
- the voter is of unsound mind as established by a court;
- the voter is incarcerated for a felony;
- a certified court order directing the cancellation of the voter's registration is filed with the election administrator;
- notice is received from the Secretary of State or from another county or state that the voter registered in another county or state;
- the voter fails to respond to certain confirmation mailings, is [placed on the inactive list](#),¹¹⁷ and then fails to vote in two consecutive federal general elections; or
- the voter is not:
 - 18 years of age or older;
 - a resident of the state of Montana and of the county in which the voter offered to vote for at least 30 days, except if the voter changed residence to a different county 30 days or less before an election; or
 - a citizen of the United States.¹¹⁸

If the voter's name is not on the voter registration roll, and regular and late registration deadlines have passed, and the voter has ensured that they are at the correct polling location, the voter can consider casting a provisional ballot, see [Question 75](#).

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

See info in the [How to Vote: Election Day](#) Section, above, specifically [Questions 20 - 24](#).

ACCESSIBILITY/ASSISTANCE

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

Instructions on how to prepare a ballot or use a voting system must be posted in each voting station provided for the preparation of ballots. The instructions must be in easily read type, 18 point or larger, and explain:

- How to obtain ballots for voting;
- How to prepare ballots, including how to:
 - Cast a valid vote, including a valid vote for a write-in candidate;
 - Correct a mistake; and
 - Ensure the proper disposition of the ballot after the elector is finished voting;
- How to obtain a new ballot in place of one spoiled by accident; and

¹¹⁷ See [here](#) or "Reactivating Your Registration" on <https://votemt.gov/voter-registration/> for information on inactive voter list and instructions.

¹¹⁸ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-2-402.

- How to vote provisionally pursuant to 13-13-601 of the Montana Code.¹¹⁹

Additionally, sample ballots, clearly marked “sample” across the face, must be posted in at least one conspicuous place at each polling place.¹²⁰

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?

Every polling place has at least one specialized voting machine (called “ExpressVote”) that enables people with disabilities to vote independently and privately.

If the voter cannot enter the polling place, election judges should bring a ballot to the voter in their automobile to complete.

If the voter has a physical disability or is unable to read or write, an election judge may help the voter mark their ballot, or the voter may bring any individual (other the voter’s employer or employer’s agent or union agent) who, with the permission of the election judge, can go into the voting booth to help the voter vote.

If the voter is assigned to an inaccessible polling place, they have the right to ask in writing at least two days prior to Election Day to be reassigned to the nearest accessible polling place. The voter can also ask to vote by absentee ballot at a designated voting station at the county election administrator’s office.

Individuals with a disability may [apply for an electronic ballot](#) that can be marked on their personal computer, printed, and returned by mail or in person to the election office.

For additional details and information, see the Secretary of State’s [Voters with Disabilities](#)¹²¹ information page.

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. Montana law requires that each polling place have at least one specialized voting machine (called “ExpressVote”) that will enable people with disabilities to vote independently and privately. Any disabled voter who needs assistance voting is entitled to have a person of their choice, other than the voter’s employer, an agent of the employer, or an officer or agent of the voter’s union, mark the voter’s choices or assist the voter in marking their choices on the ballot.

For additional details and information, see the Secretary of State’s [Voters with Disabilities](#) information page.¹²²

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?

¹¹⁹ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-112.

¹²⁰ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-112.

¹²¹ <https://sosmt.gov/elections/disabilities/>

¹²² <https://sosmt.gov/elections/disabilities/>

Voters who cannot read or speak in English may bring their own interpreter to the polls or may bring any individual (not an employer or employee's agent or union agent), with an election judge's permission, to assist with voting in the booth.¹²³

Section 203 of the Federal Voting Rights Act requires areas with large numbers of voters with limited English proficiency to provide in-language voting materials.¹²⁴

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

Yes. Voters who are unable to enter the polling location may ask that a ballot be brought to them by an election judge.¹²⁵

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

Yes. A voter can bring notes or a voting guide into a voting booth.

STATE SPECIFIC SUPPLEMENT

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

The Montana Secretary of State's [Election & Voter Services](#)¹²⁶ and [Vote Montana](#)¹²⁷ websites provide election and voter information, lookup tools, and county official contact information.

Contact information for Montana County election offices and administrators is available on the Secretary of State's website [here](#).

The Montana Secretary of State's Election Helpline is available by phone at 406-444-9608 and by email at soselections@mt.gov.

The Secretary of State's toll free voter hotline number is 1-888-884-VOTE (8683).

¹²³ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-112.

¹²⁴ See [Civil Rights Division's Memo on Language Minority Citizens \(justice.gov\)](#). Montana does not have any localities on the most recent [2021 list of jurisdictions](#) covered under the special 203 requirements.

¹²⁵ Mont. Code Ann. § 13-13-112.

¹²⁶ <https://sosmt.gov/elections/>

¹²⁷ <https://votemt.gov/>