

Frequently Asked Questions

Washington – General Election 2024

Last Updated: 8/6/24

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:)

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:)

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:)

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

POLLING PLACE ISSUES

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

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

ACCESSIBILITY/ASSISTANCE

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

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

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

REGISTERING TO VOTE

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

Registration Eligibility: To register to vote, a voter MUST be:

- A United States citizen;
- A resident of the state of Washington;
- 18 years of age or older on election day
- 16 or 17 yrs. of age who can pre-register as a [Future Voter](#) to become automatically registered to vote when turning 18; (also see [FAQ #2](#))
- Not disqualified from voting due to a court order (i.e. guardianship court order THAT HAS EXPRESSLY REMOVED THAT RIGHT IN A COURT ORDER)¹;
- No longer serving a sentence of total confinement in prison for a Washington felony conviction; and

¹ RCW 29A.08.515

- No longer serving a sentence of total confinement in prison for a federal or another state felony conviction.²

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?](#)

Yes, any registered voter may vote in the primary election, and does not need to be registered with a political party. WA state runs a “top 2” primary for most elected offices; the only exceptions are during the March presidential primary (every 4 years) and for precinct committee officer races (every two years). In these two circumstances, the voter must affirm their party affiliation on their ballot after selecting their candidate from that party. The voter’s party preference will be automatically removed from their voter record 60 days after certification of the primary election.³

A 17 yr. old may vote in a primary election or presidential primary election if that person will be 18 years old by the next general election.⁴

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

IMPORTANT: A WA resident who calls the hotline regarding registration questions may have been automatically registered to vote while getting a driver’s license/state ID or obtaining other services via a state government agency that requires proof of US citizenship. THE FIRST PLACE TO START IS ALWAYS on the Washington’s Election Website [VoteWa.gov](#). Additionally, a voter can contact their [county elections office](#) to confirm registration. County auditors are required to mail voter registration acknowledgment notice packages to newly registered voters.⁵

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

WA residents may register **ONLINE, IN PERSON, OR BY MAIL:**

Online

Individuals should go to [VoteWA.gov](#) (no printer needed). Only the following forms of ID are acceptable for on-line registration:⁶

BEFORE JULY 15, 2024	AFTER JULY 15, 2024
WA-issued Driver’s License (DL)	WA-issued DL
WA-issued State ID	WA-issued State ID

² RCW 29A.08.520; 9.94A.030(52)

³ WAC 434-219-330; RCW 29A.52.112

⁴ RCW 29A.08.170

⁵ RCW 29A.08.110

⁶ RCW 29A.08.123(1)(a-e)

Current WA tribal ID ONLY if the SOS can obtain a copy of applicant’s signature from either the federal government or tribal government.	Current WA tribal ID
	WA-issued learner’s permit
	Social Security # (a person must also submit “signature images” to the Secretary of State as part of the confirmation notice process for their voter registration.)

In Person

Individuals may register in person at any [county elections office](#). Department of Licensing (DOL) and other WA state agencies that require documentary proof of US citizenship to receive that service must offer and automatically register individuals applying for those services if the applicant wishes.⁷ If the voter registers at a DOL office or other location, the voter should retain proof of their voter registration application.

By Mail

If a voter has printer access, voter registration forms can be downloaded from the [Washington Secretary of State website](#) at sos.wa.gov/elections/voters. If a voter does not have printer access, they can contact their [county elections office](#) to have a voter registration form mailed to them.

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

An applicant is duly registered to vote in WA when all five following pieces of required information are provided whether by mail, online, or in-person: name, residential address, birthdate, signature, and a mark attesting to citizenship. *NOTE: This means that WA residents can register in person without photo ID.*⁸

Under these circumstances, the applicant is considered **PROVISIONALLY REGISTERED** until their identity can be verified.

Ideally, the applicant can provide one of those forms of ID listed [FAQ#4](#). If none of these are available, an applicant may use one of the following to verify identity:

- Valid photo identification*;
- Valid enrollment card of a federally recognized tribe in Washington state;
- A copy of a current utility bill;
- A current bank statement;
- A copy of a current government check;
- A copy of a current paycheck; or
- A government document, other than a voter registration card, that shows both the name and address of the voter.⁹

⁷ RCW 29A.08.310

⁸ RCW 29A.08.010

⁹ RCW 29A.08.107

*WA does not have an exclusive list of what is/what is not considered a “valid photo ID.” If a vote needs assistance in determining whether they have an “acceptable valid ID,” they should contact their [county elections office](#). Any government-issued ID (DL, state ID, passport, tribal ID, or military ID) will be acceptable. Please see the WA state DOL brochure [Identification Requirements](#) as a resource for additional options.

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 deadline to register to vote **by mail or online** is 8 days before the date of any election (October 28, 2024 for the 2024 General Election).¹⁰ Within 8 days, a voter can go **in person** to a voting center or county elections office up until 8:00 PM on Election Day.

ACTIVE MILITARY (including military spouses and dependents away from home because of military service) and **OVERSEAS VOTERS** are exempt from the 8-day voter registration deadline and may register and request a ballot up until 8PM Election Day. They will not, however, be able to update any changes to WA residential address within the 8 days before the election (October 28, 2024 for the 2024 General Election) (meaning they can only vote using their previous residential address).¹¹

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

Yes. In-person registration may be done during business hours and any time before 8:00 PM on Election day at ANY county auditor's office, the division of elections if in a separate location from the county auditor's office, a voting center, a student engagement hub, or other location designated by the county auditor.¹²

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

Yes.

More than 8 days before an election: the voter should update their registration information on the [VoteWa.gov](#) website (easiest), call their [county elections department](#), or download and submit a voter registration form (<https://www.sos.wa.gov/elections/print-voter-registration-forms.aspx>) to county elections office, the department of licensing, or any other state agency that has implemented automatic voter registration. If a voter is updating their move via mail form, it must be received by their county elections office NO LATER THAN 8 days before the election (October 28, 2024 for the 2024 General Election). If the move is within the same county, the voter can also email their county elections office with their name, DOB, old and new residential and mailing addresses.

Within 8 days of an election (October 28, 2024 for the 2024 General Election): See procedure #7 Same-day registration. If the registered voter has missed the deadline and does not want to go in-person, they also have the option to vote the ballot associated with their previous residential address.¹³

¹⁰ RCW 29A.08.140

¹¹ RCW 29A.08.140(2)(i)

¹² RCW 29A.08.140 (1)(b)

¹³ RCW 29A.08.140

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

More than 8 days before election (Before October 28, 2024 for the 2024 General Election): The voter may specify a mailing address that is different from their residential address (as long as they have lived at their residential address for at least 30 days (October 6, 2024 for the 2024 General Election)) either online at [VoteWa.gov](#) or by downloading the [paper form](#) and mailing it to their [county elections office](#) (must be RECEIVED by elections office NO LATER than 8 days prior to the election).

Within 8 days of an election (October 28, 2024 for the 2024 General Election): The voter can just go to their online portal at [VoteWa.gov](#) and print a new ballot and envelope (this is assuming that they have internet/printer access at their temporary location.) That ballot can then be mailed (if able to be postmarked by 8PM Election Day) or placed in a county drop box [Drop Box and Voting Center Locations - Elections & Voting - WA Secretary of State](#). Additionally, a voter can go to ANY voting center at their current location and tell elections officials that they need to have a ballot from their residential county printed; and the voter can turn in the completed ballot at their temporary location.¹⁴

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, if the student considers their school address to be their physical residence (so “No” to the “Remote” portion of the question.). An out-of-state student may register to vote in Washington if they have lived at their school for at least 30 days (October 6, 2024 for the 2024 General Election). If the student was previously registered in another state, they must cancel their registration in that state when they register in Washington. If the voter lives on campus and provides a campus address as their residential address, they must list their dormitory and room number; a PO Box is not a residential address (*though it IS an acceptable mailing address.*)

University/college students have the option of voting at their school engagement hub. The student can find its location on their college/university website, and their exact ballot can be downloaded from an online portal.¹⁵

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

Special Deadlines for this group, please review [FAQ #6](#).

REGISTRATION:

Military/Overseas WA residents can register online at [VoteWa.gov](#) using their WA state residential address if they have a WA state ID/driver’s license or WA-issued tribal ID (before 7/15/24 only if SOS has electronic signature copy)*; otherwise they must register using a [paper form](#). They can then return the paper form by mail, email, or fax to their [county elections department](#). Alternatively, they may use the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) found at [FVAP.gov](#) to register to vote and request a special absentee ballot. This form can be downloaded (and then printed) at [Standard Form 76, "Federal Post Card Application \(FPCA\)"](#). Another available option for registration is the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB).

If the military/overseas voter has a WA state DL or ID (and possibly WA-issued tribal ID), it will be easier to use the [VoteWa.gov](#); however they may be more familiar with the FPCA from their time in military

¹⁴ RCW 29A.08.140(2)(a)(ii),(b); 29A.40.180(1); 29A.08.125(1-2),(5-7)

¹⁵ RCW 29A.40.180

service. Either way is sufficient. If a voter is currently stationed in WA but wishes to vote in their home state, they should use the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) found at [FVAP.gov](#).

* After July 15, 2024, Military/Overseas WA residents should be able online register if they have a WA-issued tribal ID/ WA learner's permit, or SS#. They should also be informed of the downloadable paper form in case the online updates are delayed.

VOTING:

Military and overseas citizens can receive voting materials by fax, email, or postal service. Military and overseas voters can request to receive a ballot (special absentee) as early as 90 days before the election (August 7, 2024 for the 2024 General Election). Ballots for the 2024 General Election will be mailed out to voters **Saturday, September 21st, 2024**. Voters should contact (phone/email/fax) their [county elections department](#) to:

- Request a ballot or a replacement ballot (if unable to on the [VoteWa.gov](#) portal);
- Change how they receive their ballot (for example, by email instead of postal mail); or
- Update their voter registration record (for example, update their mailing address if unable to go on the [VoteWa.gov](#) portal).

If the military/overseas voter wishes to use FPCA ([FVAP.gov](#)) and chooses to use the fax or email options, they must indicate this on their FPCA.

If the military/overseas voter is concerned that they won't receive their regular ballot in time to vote, they can also request a Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB), which is a blank write-in ballot. FWABs are available at consulates, embassies, from Military Voting Assistance Officers, and [online](#). Ballots must be returned by the 8 PM Election Day deadline if sent by fax or email, and must include the signed and dated declaration page, privacy sheet and ballot in the email as scanned or imaged attachments.¹⁶ If sent by mail, it must be postmarked by Election Day. It must be received by the voter's county elections office within 9 days after a Special Election, 13 days after a Primary, and within 20 days after a General Election (November 25, 2024 for the 2024 General Election).

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 voter is convicted of a felony in Washington State, their right to vote is automatically restored as long as they are no longer serving a sentence of total confinement in prison for a Washington felony conviction (or federal/another state felony conviction). Once their right is restored, they must re-register to vote in order to receive a ballot. A voter does not lose the right to vote for a misdemeanor conviction or a conviction in juvenile court.¹⁷

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.

¹⁶ RCW 29A.40.091

¹⁷ [Felony Convictions and Voting Rights | WA Secretary of State](#)

No.

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

First, the voter should be reassured that their registration is PRESUMED VALID. Then, the voter should be asked how they learned of the challenge-notification of the challenge must be sent via certified mail from the challenger with return service, including the basis for the challenge, a copy of the challenger’s signed affidavit, and date/time/location of the hearing. The voter may choose to present evidence in person, via video telecommunication technology, or in writing with signed affidavit, to refute the challenge. It is not mandatory for the voter or their challenger to appear; the county canvassing board will render a decision based on the available facts. The voter will be allowed to correct their residential address (if that is the basis for the registration challenge), and their ballot will be adjusted for specific races that may no longer apply with the updated address.¹⁸

HOW TO VOTE: ELECTION DAY

15. HOURS: [When do the polls open/close on Election Day?](#)

NOTE: WA IS AN ALL-MAIL STATE. HOWEVER, IN-PERSON VOTING CAN OCCUR AT COUNTY VOTING CENTERS. THESE PROVIDE VOTER REGISTRATION MATERIALS, VOTER PAMPHLETS, BALLOTS, PROVISIONAL BALLOTS, INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO PROPERLY VOTE THE BALLOT, SAMPLE BALLOTS, AND DISABILITY ACCESS VOTING UNITS.

Voting centers and student engagement hubs opening hours can vary by county. All voting centers and student engagement hubs must remain open until 8:00 P.M on Election Day.¹⁹ The voter should check their [county elections office](#) website for exact hours of operation.

16. POLLING LOCATION: [Where do I vote on Election Day?](#)

Voters can go to a county voting center; they can check for the most convenient location at either [VoteWA.gov](#) or [Drop Box and Voting Center Locations | WA Secretary of State](#). Student voters can go to their student engagement hub at their college/university.

1. TIME OFF WORK: [Is my employer required to give me time off to vote? Is it paid or unpaid?](#)

This does not apply as the State of WA is an entirely vote by mail state.

17. CLOSING: [What if the polls close when I am already in line?](#)

Any voter who is inside or in line at the voting center or student engagement hub at 8:00 P.M. on the day of the primary, special election, or general election must be allowed to vote.²⁰

¹⁸ RCW 29A.08.810; RCW 29A.08.820; RCW 29.08.840

¹⁹ RCW 29A.40.160

²⁰ RCW 29A.40.160

18. IDENTIFICATION: What identification is required to vote?

Provisionally Registered Voter:

None. The voter must first sign the ballot declaration to be given a ballot (provisional), and will need to provide the requisite information that is missing from their registration application by 4:30 pm the day before votes are certified in order to have their ballot counted.²¹ Elections are certified 10 days after special elections, 14 days after primaries, and 21 days after the general election (November 26, 2024 for the 2024 General Election).²²

Fully Registered Voter:

None, unless their signed ballot declaration **DOES NOT MATCH** their registration signature electronically on file. In this instance, the voter must provide a valid photo ID. Valid forms include²³:

- Government-issued ID
- Student identification card,
- WA state-issued Tribal identification card,
- Employer-issued ID

If the fully registered voter does not have any of these ID forms, they can still vote (provisionally) but will need to provide ID verification by 4:30 PM the day before certification to have their ballot counted (November 25, 2024 for the 2024 General Election). Elections are certified 10 days after special elections, 14 days after primaries, and 21 days after the general election (November 26, 2024 for the 2024 General Election).

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

Yes. SEE [FAQ #19](#) ABOVE.

20. 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?

N/A. WA state does not use polling books. WA state and uses a statewide electronic voter registration system that allows for electronic access and information transfer between the county's voter registration system and the official statewide voter registration list.²⁴

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

It means that election officials are:

- unable to verify that you are a registered voter; or
- their records show that you have already voted in the election; or
- there is a question on your part concerning the issues or candidates on which you are qualified to vote on; or
- Any other reason allowed by law.²⁵

²¹ RCW 29A.40.160(10)

²² RCW 29A.60.190

²³ RCW 29A.40.160(9)(b)

²⁴ RCW 29A.08.125

²⁵ RCW 29A.04.008

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

NO VOTER SHOULD BE TOLD THEY CANNOT VOTE,²⁶ and every voter who comes to a voting center MUST be given a ballot even if their registration cannot be verified at the time or there is a record that they have already voted.²⁷ The voter must first sign the ballot declaration to be given a ballot, and will need to provide the requisite information by 4:30 pm the day before votes are certified in order to have their ballot counted.²⁸ Elections are certified 10 days after special elections, 14 days after primaries, and 21 days after the general election (November 26, 2024 for the 2024 General Election).²⁹

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

Elections officials will provide the voter the reason for the need to vote provisionally and give the voter information for the next steps towards resolving their ballot status.³⁰ The voter should then contact their [county elections office](#) to check the status of their provisional ballot, whether it was ultimately counted or (if applicable) the reason it wasn't counted. They can arrange with their election officials the most expedient way of providing the required information (i.e. electronically/fax). The voter must provide the needed information to their election officials no later than the day before certification of the primary or election. Elections are certified 10 days after special elections, 14 days after primaries, and 21 days after the general election (November 26, 2024 for the 2024 General Election)³¹. If the voter provides the requisite information, their registration status must be changed from "provisionally registered" to "registered," and their ballot counted.³²

HOW TO VOTE: IN-PERSON EARLY VOTING

(in this state there is no distinction b/t early voting and election day voting)

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

Voting centers open 18 days prior to Election Day (October 18, 2024 for the 2024 General Election). Student engagement hubs open 8 days prior to Election Day (October 28, 2024 for the 2024 General Election).³³ Hours of operation may vary between counties/schools, so check with the voter's [county elections office](#) or the student's university website to confirm hours. On the voter's county elections website ([county elections office](#)), there will be information regarding which voting centers are open

²⁶ RCW 29A.04.206

²⁷ RCW 29A.40.160(14)

²⁸ RCW 29A.08.107(b)

²⁹ RCW 29A.60.190

³⁰ RCW 29A.40.160(10)

³¹ RCW 29A.60.190

³² RCW 29A.08.107(3)

³³ RCW 29A.40.180

during the “early voting” period. A registered voter may bring their mail ballot to a voting center/student engagement hub anytime during this period should they require assistance.

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

No.

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

Voting begins 18 days before Election Day (October 18, 2024 for the 2024 General Election) when ballots are received by voters and ends at 8 PM on Election Day.³⁴

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

See [Question 16](#).

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

See [Question 19](#).

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

If a voter states that they are unable to cast their votes due to disability, the voter may designate a person of their choice or two election officers to enter the voting booth and record the votes as they direct.³⁵

HOW TO VOTE: VOTE BY MAIL

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

Yes, all registered voters will receive a ballot in the mail.³⁶

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

No.

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

A request is not necessary in the State of Washington because every registered voter automatically receives a mail ballot.

³⁴ RCW 29A.40.160; RCW 29A.40.070

³⁵ RCW 29A.40.160(12)

³⁶ RCW 29A.40.010

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

This does not apply in the State of Washington as there is no application for a “mail-in ballot.”

34. 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?

This does not apply in the State of Washington as there is no application for a “mail-in ballot.”

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

No. Voter must only sign and date the ballot declaration³⁷. Voters should be encouraged to provide their email address or phone number in the space provided in case their election officials need to contact them regarding problems with their ballot (i.e. signatures don’t match).

36. 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?

No. Mail-in ballots can be sent to any mailing address AS LONG AS the voter’s residential address is WA state. Voters who lack a traditional residential address (but have a residential location they deem to be their residence) can still receive a mail ballot if they can provide a valid mailing address³⁸. Examples of valid mailing addresses include: PO Box, address of a friend or relative, shelter, or general delivery at a local post office. After registering with general delivery, mail will be held at a voter’s main post office for up to 30 days and can be picked up at their convenience. Call (800) ASK-USPS for more information.

See [Question #11](#) for Military/Overseas voters.

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

N/A. All registered voters will receive a mail ballot beginning 18 days before an election (October 18, 2024 for the 2024 General Election).³⁹

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

A voter can check the status of their ballot by logging into their voter portal at [VoteWA](#) and clicking on "Ballot Status". They can also contact their [county elections office](#) for assistance if they do not have computer access.

³⁷ RCW 29A.40.091(1)

³⁸ RCW 29A.08.112

³⁹ RCW 29A.40.070

39. **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?

The county auditor must notify the voter via **first class mail AND email/phone/text** if that information is available in the voter's registration record that their ballot was rejected.⁴⁰ If the voter hasn't responded to that letter by the last five business days before certification, county auditors must attempt to contact the voter by phone to inform them of the correct procedures for curing their ballot.⁴¹

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

Follow the instructions on the ballot for how to complete. A ballot will NOT be considered completed if the declaration is not signed.

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

Yes, but the voter must sign the declaration. If a voter is unable to sign the declaration, the voter can make a mark in front of two witnesses and have them sign in the designated spaces.⁴²

42. **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?

Mail ballots must be postmarked by 8PM on Election Day, brought in person to a voting center/student engagement hub, or deposited in a ballot drop box by 8 PM on Election Day.⁴³

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

Ballot drop box locations can be found in the voter's portal [VoteWA.gov](#), online at [Drop Box and Voting Center Locations - Elections & Voting - WA Secretary of State](#), or by calling their [county elections office](#).

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

Yes. There is no statutory prohibition on someone else dropping off a completed ballot for a voter.

45. **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?

The easiest way for a registered voter to receive a replacement ballot is to go online and download/print from their voter portal at [VoteWA.gov](#). Otherwise, the voter should contact their [county elections office](#) to determine the best way to receive a replacement ballot. Replacement ballots may be sent via mail or electronically, as well as picked up at their elections office/voting center (if within 18 days of election (October 18, 2024 for the 2024 General Election)).

⁴⁰ RCW 29A.60.165(1)

⁴¹ RCW 29A.60.165(1)

⁴² WAC 434-230-015

⁴³ RCW 29A.40.160, RCW 29A.40.170; RCW 29A.40.180

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

The voter can go to their voter portal at VoteWA.gov to print a replacement ballot and envelope, and can then place in the mail or most convenient county dropbox or bring to voting center/student engagement hub. If the voter does NOT have printer access, they can go in person to a voting center/student engagement hub (if they are a college/university student) where a replacement ballot can be printed for them.

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

The voter can choose to go to their most convenient voting center to vote in person. [Drop Box and Voting Center Locations - Elections & Voting - WA Secretary of State](#). If the voter needs further assistance in locating their closest voting location, they should contact their local county elections office.

HOW TO VOTE: ABSENTEE

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

If a registered voter will be out of the state for an extended period and unable to vote and return a regular ballot by normal mail delivery within the 18-day period provided for regular ballots (pragmatically meaning without access to internet and/or printer, or mailbox to mail the ballot), the registered voter can apply for a *special absentee ballot* by contacting their [county elections office](#).⁴⁴

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

A special absentee ballot may be requested not more than 90 days prior to an election (August 7, 2024 for the 2024 General Election). The voter will need to sign an application stating that they will be unable to vote and return a regular ballot by normal mail delivery within the period provided for regular ballots. A voter who requests a special absentee ballot may also return a regular ballot (i.e. their plans changed), and under those circumstances the special absentee ballot will be voided.⁴⁵

50. IDENTIFICATION: Are there any identification requirements?

There are no additional identification requirements if the voter already is registered to vote. If the voter needs to register prior to requesting the special absentee ballot, follow FAQs #[4-6](#).

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

⁴⁴ RCW 29A.40.050

⁴⁵ *Id.*

The voter should contact their [county elections office](#) for assistance in determining the most expedient way for the voter to receive/return a ballot under their specific emergency circumstances. Registered voters can have their ballots (including replacement ballots) downloaded and printed from any location, including a hospital, and any person of the voter's choice can bring the ballot to a voting center, mailbox, or county drop box.

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

SEE [FAQ #47](#). There are no prohibitions on who can return an application or ballot in WA State.

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

Any registered voter who will need a special absentee ballot in order to be able to vote will be provided one. They can check the status of their ballot on their voter portal at [VoteWA.gov](#) by clicking "Ballot Status." They can also contact their [county elections office](#).

54. 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?

A voter can check the status of your ballot by logging into VoteWA and clicking on "Ballot Status".

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

See [FAQ # 39](#). The voter should contact their [county elections office](#) to determine the most expeditious way of correcting the ballot (i.e. whether/how missing information can be provided electronically/or by fax/mail).

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

Yes.

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

Mail ballots must be postmarked by 8PM on Election Day, brought in person to a voting center/student engagement hub, or deposited in a ballot drop box by 8 PM on Election Day.⁴⁶

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

See [FAQ #44](#).

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

Yes.

⁴⁶RCW 29A.40.160, RCW 29A.40.170; RCW 29A.40.180

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

See [FAQ #46](#). Additionally, depending on the voter’s current location (are they overseas?), they could complete a Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB). See [FAQ #11](#) for more information and a link.

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

See [FAQ # 47](#).

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

The voter can go in person to any voting center or student engagement hub (if they are a college student), and their special absentee ballot will be subsequently voided.

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

This does not apply in Washington State. SEE [FAQ #48](#).

POLLING PLACE ISSUES

(In this state referred to as: Voting Centers)

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

The voter should go to their county elections office website to confirm which voting centers are operational for that particular election. For student engagement hubs, check the college or university website.

65. 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?

TELL THE VOTER TO NOT LEAVE! Any voter who is inside or in line at the voting center or student engagement hub at 8:00 P.M. on the day of the primary, special election, or general election must be allowed to vote.⁴⁷

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

Inform the election officials at the voting center or student engagement hub immediately. Do not leave without casting a ballot. Voters may be provided with a conditional ballot if equipment is unable to process registration/provide ballot.⁴⁸

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

⁴⁷ RCW 29A.40.160

⁴⁸ WAC 434-250-110

No person within 100 feet of a voting center or student engagement hub entrance may interfere with a voter's freedom to exercise their right to vote or disrupt the administration of the voting center or student engagement hub. This restriction on distance is 25 feet for ballot drop boxes. These distances are measured RADIALLY. Examples of such prohibited behavior include, but are not limited to:

- Suggest/persuade/ attempt to suggest or persuade any voter to vote for or against any candidate or ballot measure, or
- Circulate cards or handbills of any kind, or
- Solicit signatures to any kind of petition, or
- Use of a megaphone or other audio amplification device outside of the 100 ft/25 ft electioneering zone (for any of the above), AND it can be heard within 100 ft/25 ft electioneering zone.⁴⁹

If not one of the above delineated behaviors, the context-specific test will be whether the behavior by that person interferes with the freedom of voters to exercise their franchise or disrupts the administration of the voting center.

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

A voter may not:

- Deliberately impede other voters from casting their votes by refusing to leave a voting booth or voting device OR
- Engage in electioneering behavior (see [FAQ #67](#)) OR
- Interfere with the freedom of voters to exercise their franchise or disrupt the administration of the voting center⁵⁰
- Carry/possess any firearm (unless voter has a concealed pistol permit), stun gun, air gun, designed to propel a BB, pellet, or other projectile by the discharge of compressed air, carbon dioxide, or other gas, spring blade knife, or any other dangerous weapon.⁵¹ SEE [FAQ #72](#)

There is no legal restriction on apparel unless it meets the electioneering threshold of "suggest, persuade, or attempt to suggest or persuade any voter to vote for or against any candidate or ballot measure."⁵² There is no legal restriction on so-called 'ballot selfies.' However, it is illegal to photograph another's ballot for a purpose prohibited by law, such as vote-buying, and it violates another person's right to total privacy in casting their vote.⁵³

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

Election officials are prohibited from electioneering at a voting center.⁵⁴ See [FAQ # 67](#). They cannot obstruct entries or prevent free access. They cannot wear candidate, campaign, or otherwise political attire while on duty⁵⁵. There is no legal restriction on apparel unless it meets the electioneering

⁴⁹ RCW 29A.84.510

⁵⁰ RCW 29A.84.530; RCW 29A.84.510

⁵¹ RCW 9.41.284; 9.41.010; RCW 9.41.070

⁵² RCW 29A.84.510

⁵³ [Frequently Asked Questions about Elections | WA Secretary of State](#)

⁵⁴ RCW 29A.84.520

⁵⁵ RCW 42.17A.555

threshold of "suggest, persuade, or attempt to suggest or persuade any voter to vote for or against any candidate or ballot measure."⁵⁶

70. **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?

Contact 911 immediately if you feel physically unsafe.

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

It depends on when the challenge is filed in relation to the status of the voter's ballot. If the challenge is filed before the challenged voter's ballot is received, the ballot must be processed as a challenged ballot and held until the challenge is resolved. If the challenge is filed after the challenged voter's ballot is received, the challenge cannot affect the current election. However, the process will proceed until the challenge is resolved. See [FAQ #14](#).

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

Yes. Additionally, a person who is not a commissioned law enforcement officer and who provides elections and voter registration security services under the direction of a county may carry a firearm only if they have successfully completed training in the use of firearms that is equivalent to the training received by commissioned law enforcement officers.⁵⁷

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

Washington State has same-day registration, so the voter can get registered to vote. If they have a WA state DL or ID, tribal ID, or last #4 of SS, or another government-issued ID, the voter can be fully registered and then vote. If the voter does not have the above identification on them, they can still provisionally register and receive a ballot, but their ballot cannot be accepted and counted until they pass the ID check. For their ballots to be counted, they must pass the ID check by 4:30 p.m. on the day before the certification of that election. Elections are certified 10 days after special elections, 14 days after primaries, and 21 days after the general election (November 26, 2024 for the 2024 General Election). SEE [FAQ #24](#)

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

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

First, find out the reason: if it is an ID issue, determine if the issue can be resolved immediately so the provisional status can be removed from their ballot. If the reason cannot be resolved while the voter is at the voting center/student engagement hub, it is acceptable to vote provisionally but the voter should contact their [county elections office](#) to determine what steps need to happen for the provisional status to be removed from their ballot.

⁵⁶ RCW 29A.84.510

⁵⁷ RCW 9.41.284

ACCESSIBILITY/ASSISTANCE

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

Yes, absolutely. Ask an election official—they are there to assist voters!

76. 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 voting center/student engagement hub MUST be accessible to persons with disabilities, with disability access voting in a location or manner that provides for voter privacy. Each county auditor must have a contingency plan to accommodate accessible voting in the event that an accessible voting unit malfunctions or must be removed from service.⁵⁸

77. 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?

Each voting center must provide at least one voting unit certified by the secretary of state that provides access to individuals who are blind or visually impaired and have electronic or telephonic access to the voter registration system. If a voter is unable to cast their votes due to a disability, the voter may designate a person of their choice, or two election officers, to enter the voting booth and record the votes as they direct.⁵⁹

78. 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?

The WA SOS has voter registration materials available in 23 languages([Print a Voter Registration Form | WA Secretary of State](#)). [VoteWA.gov](#) is also available in Chinese, Russian, Somali, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Since all registered WA State voters receive a mail ballot, they can have any person assist them with translation in the privacy of their residence. At a voting center or student engagement hub for a federal election, this must be allowed under Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act. In a state or local race, this should be confirmed with the voter's [County Elections Office](#).

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

Curbside Voting is not available and unnecessary in WA. Should there be some unique circumstances where a voter is not able to utilize the accessible voting centers/dropboxes, the voter should contact

⁵⁸ WAC 434-250-105

⁵⁹ RCW 29A.40.160(12)

their [County Elections Office](#) where election officials can work with the voter to determine a solution to best meet their particular circumstances.

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

Yes. Any voter may take printed or written material into the voting device to assist in casting their vote, but they cannot use this material to electioneer and must remove it when leaving the voting center.

STATE SPECIFIC SUPPLEMENT

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

The Secretary of State can be contacted [here](#).