

Frequently Asked Questions

DC – General Election 2024

Last Updated: 8/2/2024

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.

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REGISTERING TO VOTE

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

To register to vote in D.C., a voter must:

- Be a United States citizen*;
- Be a D.C. resident for at least 30 days immediately prior to the election;
- Not claim voting residence or the right to vote in another U.S. state or territory;
- Be at least 16 years old (Note: Voters may pre-register to vote if they are at least 16 years old. Voters may vote in a **primary election** if they are at least 17 years old and will be at least 18 years old by the next general election. Voters may vote in a **general or special election** if they are at least 18 years old.); and

- Not have been found by a court to be legally incompetent to vote
- * NON-US CITIZENS may vote in local elections. See [Question 82](#).¹

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

To vote in a primary election in D.C., D.C. voters must be registered to vote with one of the parties that is eligible to conduct a primary election (Democratic, Republican, or D.C. Statehood Green). A voter must be registered with one of these parties on or before the 21st day before the primary election, unless the voter is registering for the first time when they vote. In that case, the voter may register with a party when they vote. A voter may change their party registration through the [Register/Update Voter Registration](#) (<https://www.dcooe.org/voters/register-to-vote/register-update-voter-registration>) page. Election workers are prohibited from engaging in any kind of political campaign activity.

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

Voters can determine whether they are registered to vote by checking the D.C. Board of Elections website ([Check your Voter Registration Status | DC Board of Elections](#)). The website will ask for first name, last name, date of birth (DOB), zip code, and one of the following: last 4 digits of social security number (SSN), last 4 digits of department of motor vehicles (DMV)-issued ID, or voter ID number.

Voters may also inquire about the status of their voter registration by contacting the D.C. Board of Elections at (202) 727-2525, Monday-Friday, 8:15 am-4:45 pm (except for District holidays).

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

There are three ways to register to vote: (1) online, (2) by mail, email, or fax, or (3) in person.

A voter is not officially registered to vote until the D.C. Board of Elections approves the application. A voter should receive a voter registration card in the mail within three weeks of submitting the application.

First time registration:

If a voter is registering to vote in D.C. for the first time and is submitting an application online or by mail, the voter must either (1) include a copy of one of the following documents with the application or (2) present a copy of the document the first time they vote:

- A copy of a current and valid government-issued photo identification
- A copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, or paycheck (dated no earlier than 90 days before the date the application is mailed or, if the voter does not submit proof by mail or online, 90 days before the date they vote)
- Any other government-issued document

¹ D.C. Code § 1-1001.02(2)(B)

Online:

Submit a completed Voter Registration Application through the D.C. Board of Elections website: [Voter Registration Application \(dcboe.org\)](#) (or, if you are not a U.S. citizen, through The D.C. Board of Elections non-U.S. citizen website: <https://vr.dcboe.org/240076291295963>).

By mail, fax, or email:

Download the [Mail in Voter Registration Application](#) found on the D.C. Board of Elections website (<https://www.dcboe.org/voters/register-to-vote/register-update-voter-registration>) (or, if you are not U.S. citizen, through <https://dcboe.org/voters/register-to-vote/non-citizen>) and complete the following steps:

- Complete fields 1 through 13.
- Sign the form.
- Submit the form:
 - By mail or in person at D.C. Board of Elections, 1015 Half Street, SE, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20003
 - By email (scanned as an attachment) at DCRegistrations@dcboe.org
 - By fax: at (202) 347-2648

In-person:

Visit the D.C. Board of Elections at 1015 Half Street, SE, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20003, or any voter registration agency.

Note: if the deadlines for the receipt of voter registration applications have passed, the voter can still register during early voting or on Election Day at any Election Day Vote Center. To do so, they must provide **proof of residence** that shows name and current D.C. address. Acceptable forms of proof of residence include:

- Current and valid government-issued photo identification
- Utility bill for water, gas, electricity, cable, internet, telephone, or cellular phone service issued no earlier than 90 days before the election
- Savings, checking, credit, or money market account statement from a bank or credit union issued no earlier than 90 days before the election
- Paycheck, stub, or earning statement that includes the employer's name, address, and telephone number and was issued no earlier than 90 days before the election
- Government-issued document or check from a federal or District agency, other than the D.C. Board of Elections, issued no earlier than 90 days before the election
- Current residential lease or rental agreement
- Occupancy statement from a District homeless shelter issued no earlier than 90 days before the election
- Tuition or housing bill from a D.C. college or university issued for the current academic or housing term

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

- *Registering in person during early voting or on election day:* If a voter is planning to register in person during the early voting period or on Election Day, they will need to provide proof of residence to register and vote.
- *If first time voting and did not provide proof of residence when registering by mail or electronically:* If this is someone's first time voting in D.C. and they did not provide proof of residence when registering by mail or electronically, they will need to show proof of residence to cast a live (regular) ballot.

Acceptable forms of proof of residence include the following (*must include the name and address of the voter*):

- Current and valid D.C. ID issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)
- Government check or paycheck (issued within 90 days of election day)
- Bank statement (issued within 90 days of election day)
- Current utility bill (issued within 90 days of election day)
- Student housing statement/tuition bill
- Homeless shelter occupancy statement
- Residential Lease
- Other current government document that shows the person's name and address

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?](#)

Applications submitted online or by mail, email or fax, must be received by the D.C. Board of Elections 21 days before the next election.

Same-day registration is also available. See [Question 7](#).

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

Yes, D.C. has Same-Day Registration. In order to complete Same-Day Registration during the Early Voting period or on Election Day, the person will need to complete a Voter Registration Application, swear or affirm that they are qualified to vote, and provide valid proof of residence. See [Question 5](#) above for acceptable forms of proof of residence.

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

Yes. Voters who have moved within D.C. may vote at any vote center and update their address by providing acceptable proof of residence.² (See [Question 5](#) above). Voters must have been a resident of D.C. for 30 days before the election. If someone moved to D.C. from another jurisdiction within 30 days of the election they are not eligible to vote in D.C.

To update or make corrections to voter registration, visit the Register/Update Voter Registration page: <https://www.dcboe.org/voters/register-to-vote/register-update-voter-registration>.

² D.C. Code § 1-1001.07(i)(4)(A)

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

The D.C. Board of Elections has not issued guidance on temporary moves. All active registered voters will be mailed a ballot for the 2024 elections. However, D.C. voters who expect to be away from their D.C. residence during the election must request an Absentee Ballot.

Visit <https://www.dcboe.org/voters/casting-your-vote/mail-ballot-request> to request a ballot.

10. **STUDENT:** *I am a college student. Can I register to vote where I go to school? What if I am taking classes remotely? Where can I vote?*

If a voter is currently attending college in D.C., they may vote absentee in their home state, or they may register and vote in D.C. as long as they have resided in D.C. for at least 30 days before the election (see <https://www.dcboe.org/faqs/college-high-school-students>). (See [Question 5](#) above for other acceptable proofs of address for college students in D.C.).

If a voter lives in D.C., but is attending college in another state, they may still vote as a D.C. resident by requesting an absentee ballot: <https://www.dcboe.org/voters/casting-your-vote/mail-ballot-request>. All Absentee Ballot requests must be received no later than the 15th day before the election. Voters will receive a ballot by mail. A completed ballot must be postmarked on or before Election Day, and must arrive no later than the 10th day after Election Day.

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

Military and overseas voters should fill out a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) to both register to vote and request an absentee ballot: <https://www.fvap.gov/district-of-columbia>.

Voters can submit a FPCA if they are 18 or older and (1) active duty members of the Uniformed Services, Merchant Marine, or commissioned corps of the Public Health Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, or (2) an eligible spouse or child of someone who fits under (1). U.S. citizens living outside the United States can also submit an FPCA.

The FPCA must be received by the D.C. Board of Elections 21 days before the election. The application can be sent:

- By mail or in-person to D.C. Board of Elections, 1015 Half Street, SE, Suite 750 Washington, DC 20003
- By email (scanned as an attachment) to UOCAVA@dcboe.org
- By fax at (202) 347-2648

Voters will receive an absentee ballot by mail, email, or fax, depending upon the delivery method selected on the FPCA.

Instructions on how to vote and return a ballot will be included with the ballot. Completed ballots that are emailed or faxed must be received by 8:00 pm on Election Day. Completed ballots that are mailed

must be postmarked or otherwise demonstrated to have been sent on or before Election Day, and received by the D.C. Board of Elections no later than the 10th day after Election Day.³

If a voter is concerned that they may not be able to receive or cast their ballot in time for it to be counted, they can visit the FVAP website at <https://www.fvap.gov/district-of-columbia> to get a Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot, which can be used to cast a vote in all federal contests on the ballot.

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.

Yes. An individual with a criminal record who otherwise meets the eligibility requirements in [Question 1](#) above can vote in D.C.

Voters can go online to make any updates to their registrations:
<https://www.dcboe.org/voters/register-to-vote/register-update-voter-registration>.

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.

Yes. Per the [D.C. Board of Elections Frequently Asked Questions](#), if someone is incarcerated, regardless of the offense, they are able to vote. The voter may vote from jail by Absentee Ballot. Those who are under court supervision or residing at a halfway house after release are also able to vote.

If a voter is currently a resident at the D.C. jail, when registering to vote, they may use their D.C. home address or the address of the D.C. jail if they have been a resident at the DC jail for at least 30 days. If the voter is currently serving time in a federal facility, they may use their D.C. home address.

If an Absentee Ballot was mailed and the voter was released from incarceration before it arrived, they may vote at any Voting Center during Early Voting or at any Vote Center on Election Day.

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

If an individual whose eligibility to vote in the election cannot be determined at an Early Voting Center or at an Election Day Vote Center, they will be referred to a Ballot Clerk and will likely need to vote by Special Ballot. If the D.C. Board of Elections determines that the voter is eligible to vote in the election, their vote will be counted.

HOW TO VOTE: ELECTION DAY

³ D.C. Official Code § 1-1001.05(a)(10)(B)

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

Polls are open between 7 a.m. and 8 p.m.

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

If someone wishes to vote in person, voters may vote at **any** Early Vote Center or Election Day Vote Center regardless of their residential address.

To find an Early Vote Center or Election Day Vote Center locations, go online and enter an address in the Vote Center Location Tool:

<https://www.dcboe.org/voters/find-out-where-to-vote/vote-center-locator-tool>

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

Yes, upon request of an employee, employers are required to provide an employee at least 2 hours of paid leave to vote in person in any election held in D.C.⁴

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

All voters who are in line at 8:00 pm may cast a ballot.

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

- *Registered voters:* If someone is a registered voter, they do not need to present identification or proof of residence to vote. However, voters are encouraged to take some form of identification with them to vote in case it is needed.
- *If first time voting and did not provide ID when registering:* If this is someone's first time voting in D.C. and they did not provide proof of residence when registering, they will need to show proof of residence to cast a live (regular) ballot. See [Question 5](#) above for acceptable forms of identification.

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

If a voter is required to show identification or proof of residence (see [Question 19](#) above), but fails to do so, they will be referred to a Ballot Clerk and will likely need to vote by Special Ballot (also known as a Provisional Ballot). If the D.C. Board of Elections determines that the voter is eligible to vote in the election, their vote will be counted.

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?

Voters are not required to vote at a specific polling location. They may vote at any Early Vote Center or Election Day Vote Center. See

<https://www.dcboe.org/voters/find-out-where-to-vote/election-day-vote-centers>

⁴ D.C. Code 1–1001.07a(b)(1).

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

Note: See the [Voting By Special Ballot FAQ](#) for latest information.

A voter may need to vote a Special Ballot (also known as a Provisional Ballot) if they:

- Return to an Early Vote Center or Election Day Vote Center after previously checking in to vote at an Early Vote Center or Election Day Vote Center
- Have already returned an Absentee Ballot
- Are required to show identification or proof of residence to complete their voter registration, but fail to provide it
 - You have two days following the election to show your identification to the D.C. Board of Elections
 - Acceptable forms of identification are listed in [Question 5](#)
- During a Primary Election, claim a different party affiliation status than that which is reflected on their voter registration
- During a General Election, claim a different ANC/SMD than that which is reflected on their voter registration
- Have had a challenge to their eligibility to vote upheld by the Vote Center Coordinator or a D.C. Board of Elections hearing examiner
- Are voting during hours extended by either a D.C. Board of Elections or court order

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

See [Question 22](#) above. If the issue is that the individual is not registered to vote, they can do same-day registration in person at the Vote Center if they have valid proof of residence.

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

All Special Ballots that have been determined to be valid are counted even if they do not change the outcome of the election.

The day after Election Day, a voter may visit the Special Ballot Status page of the D.C. Board of Elections website, or call 1-866-DC VOTES (1-866-328-6837), to learn of the D.C. Board of Elections' preliminary determination to either count or reject the voter's Special Ballot.

If the D.C. Board of Elections rejects the voter's Special Ballot, the voter may challenge this decision by scheduling an appeal hearing. The voter should contact the D.C. Board of Elections at (202) 727-2194 to schedule a time for an appeal hearing, which will be held on the Thursday after Election Day between the hours of 9:00 AM and 4:45 PM. A voter may have a lawyer present or may represent themselves. The voter should be prepared to present evidence to show that their Special Ballot should be counted.

If the voter does not win their appeal, they have one business day after the D.C. Board of Elections makes its final determination to appeal the decision to the Superior Court of the District of Columbia.

HOW TO VOTE: IN-PERSON EARLY

VOTING

(in this state defined as: Early Voting)

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

Yes. All registered D.C. voters should receive a ballot by mail in advance of the election. Once voters complete their mail-in ballots, they may:

- Drop it off at a mail ballot drop box location.
 - Mail-in-Ballot Drop Box Locations can be found here:
<https://www.dcboe.org/voters/find-out-where-to-vote/vote-center-locator-tool>
- Send it to the D.C. Board of Elections via USPS
- Vote it in person at any Early Vote Center during the Early Voting period (or on Election Day)

To ensure that voters receive their mail-in ballot at the correct address, they should [check](#) their voter registration online.

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

No.

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

The Early Voting period for the general election is from Monday, October 28, 2024 through Sunday, November 3, 2024. See [General Election Calendar](#) ⁵

Early Voting Centers are open every day during these periods between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

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

Use this link to locate the closest mail-in ballot drop box, early vote center, or Election Day vote center:
<https://www.dcboe.org/voters/find-out-where-to-vote/vote-center-locator-tool>

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

A registered voter does not need to provide identification. If a voter is planning to register in person during the early voting period, they will need to provide proof of residence to register and vote. See [Question 5](#) for a list of acceptance forms of identification.

⁵ D.C. Official Code §§ 1-1001.09(b-1)(1)-(2) requiring the operation of at least 8 Early Vote Centers; 3 DCMR § 702.2 Permits Early Vote Centers to operate no more than 12 days before an election.

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

The D.C. Board of Elections provides numerous voting options for voters who may need some form of assistance, such as senior citizens, people with disabilities, and people who are Non-English Proficient (NEP) or Limited English Proficient (LEP). Voters can learn more about these programs and services on the [Accessible Voting and Language Access](#) page.

HOW TO VOTE: VOTE BY MAIL **(in this state defined as: MAIL BALLOT)**

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

Yes, all registered voters will receive a mail ballot for the primary election and the general election.

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

No.

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

Voters do not need to request a mail ballot.

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

No application is required for a mail ballot. See [Question 30](#) for additional information regarding voting assistance.

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?

No application is needed. See [Question 31](#). There is no requirement that a voter drop off their own ballot. However, each voter who votes via mail-in ballot must sign and date the Voter's Oath on the back of the mail-in ballot envelope in order for their vote to count.

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

For first-time voters who registered by mail or online are required to provide the following ID documents with their voted mail-in ballot:

- A copy of a current and valid government-issued photo ID; OR

- A copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government-issued document that shows the voter's name and address. The issue, bill, or statement date must be no earlier than ninety (90) days before the election.

Voters should place a copy of their ID document inside the return ballot envelope. *If a voter does not provide a copy of their ID document with their voted ballot, their ballot will be treated as a special (provisional) ballot, and will not be counted unless they submit a copy of their ID to the D.C. Board of Elections.* See [Question 5](#) above for ID requirements.

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

Voters must use their residential address when registering to vote in D.C. If their mailing address is different from their residential address, they can indicate that on the application. P.O. Boxes and business addresses are not permitted.

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

All registered voters should automatically receive a mail ballot. If for whatever reason someone does not receive one, then they can vote in person at an Early Vote Center or Election Day Vote Center.

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 here:

<https://www.dcboe.org/Voters/Register-To-Vote/Check-Voter-Registration-Status>

Voters who return their mail ballot or Absentee Ballot using USPS mail or Mail Ballot Drop Box voters can track the status of their ballot by using the Ballottrax tracker. Voters may also opt in to receive Ballottrax updates about their ballot via SMS text, email, or voice message.

Voters can learn more about Ballottrax and track the status of their mail ballot or Absentee Ballot here:

<https://votedc.ballottrax.net/voter/>

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?

There are no applications for mail-in ballots, all registered voters will receive a mail-in ballot automatically.

See [Question 39](#) above for how a voter can check the status of their mail-in ballot. Ballottrax will notify voters if there is a discrepancy with their ballot (such as a missing signature) that must be cured in order for their vote to count.

If there is an issue with a voted mail ballot, the voter will receive a letter from the D.C. Board of Elections that specifies the problem with the ballot. The voter will have up to seven (7) days to resolve the issue (cure the ballot).

The most frequent issues requiring a ballot to be cured:

- Signature mismatch. The signature on the ballot return envelope does not match what the D.C. Board of Elections has on file from the voter's registration application, and/or a subsequent update to the registration application.
- Missing signature. The voter forgot to sign their ballot return envelope.

In either of these circumstances, the voter can sign the certificate included with the initial letter and can return it by emailing it to dcabsentee@dcboe.org or mailing/delivering it to D.C. Board of Elections at 1015 Half Street, SE, #750, Washington, DC, 20003.

- Proof of residency required. Valid proof of District residency must be provided.

In this instance, the voter needs to provide valid proof of residency (see acceptable forms of proof in [Question 5](#)) by either emailing it to dcabsentee@dcboe.org or mailing/delivering it to the D.C. Board of Elections, at 1015 Half Street, SE, #750, Washington, DC, 20003, along with the signed certificate included with the initial letter.

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

Instructions for filling out the mail-in ballot can be found here:

<https://www.dcboe.org/voters/casting-your-vote/mail-ballot-instructions>

1. Check for all the contents of the Mail Ballot Packet. Voters should have received the following items:

- Ballot
- Secrecy Sleeve
- Postage Prepaid Return Ballot Envelope
- Instruction Sheet with "I Voted" Sticker

2. Vote the ballot with a blue or black ink pen by filling in the oval to the left of the selected choice completely:

- Voters do not have to vote in every contest on the ballot.
- If a voter wishes to vote for an individual whose name is not printed on the ballot, the voter may write in that individual's name on the blank "write-in" line and fill in the oval to the left of that line.
- If the voter makes a mistake on their ballot or misplaces their voting materials, they should contact the D.C. Board of Elections immediately at 1-866-DCVOTES (1-866-328-6837).

3. Refold the voted ballot and place it into the Secrecy Sleeve. Do not fold the ballot to make it fit inside the Secrecy Sleeve. Ballot is wider than the Secrecy Sleeve to facilitate ballot tabulation.

4. Place the Secrecy Sleeve into the postage prepaid Return Ballot Envelope. (Only the ballot can be placed inside the Return Ballot Envelope. ***If the Return Ballot Envelope contains additional ballots other than the voter's, none of the ballots will be counted.***)
5. Sign and date the Voter's Oath on the back of the Return Ballot Envelope. The voter must sign the Voter's Oath for their vote to count.
6. Seal the Return Ballot Envelope flap, and return the voted ballot. Do not use tape to seal the envelope.

42. ASSISTANCE COMPLETING BALLOT: [Can someone assist me in filling out my ballot?](#)

Yes. The D.C. Board of Elections provides numerous voting options for voters who may need some form of assistance, such as senior citizens, people with disabilities, and people who are Non-English Proficient (NEP) or Limited English Proficient (LEP). Voters can learn more about these programs and services on the [Accessible Voting and Language Access](#) page.

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?](#)

For both the primary election and the general election, mail ballots must be postmarked on or before Election Day, and must arrive no later than the 10th day⁶ after Election Day. Voters can return ballots using the postal service, or at a mail drop-box. Voters can go online to locate the nearest mail-in ballot drop box with the [search tool here](#): or through the list of mail drop boxes here: <https://dcboe.org/voters/find-out-where-to-vote/mail-ballot-drop-box-locations>. Voters may also personally return their mail-in ballots to any Early Vote Center or Election Day Vote Center. Voters do not need to wait in line at the Early Vote Center or Election Day Vote Center when dropping off completed mail-in ballots.

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

Voters can go online to locate the nearest mail ballot drop box with the search tool here <https://dcgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/nearby/index.html?appid=763576faa0b1470ca0559c377cf3b497> or the list of locations here <https://dcboe.org/voters/find-out-where-to-vote/mail-ballot-drop-box-locations>.

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

Yes, there is no requirement that the voter drop off the ballot themselves.

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?](#)

⁶ D.C. Official Code § 1-1001.05(a)(10)(B)

- If using a mail or absentee ballot: contact the Board of Elections at (202) 727-2525 to request a new ballot.
- If voting in-person: notify an election worker immediately. They will cancel the ballot and provide the voter with a new 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?

Contact the D.C. Board of Elections at (202) 727-2525 to request a new ballot.

If a registered voter did not receive a mail-in ballot, they can vote in person at an early vote center or election day vote center. The voter can also request a ballot at <https://dcboe.org/voters/casting-your-vote/mail-ballot-request>.

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

If someone received a mail-in ballot but has decided to vote in person during the early voting period or on Election Day, they should write "Voting in Person" on the unopened mail-in ballot. They can then:

- Bring the unopened mail-in ballot to the early vote center or election day vote center and surrender it to an election worker, or
- Drop the unopened mail-in ballot into any mail ballot drop box

A new ballot will then be provided to the voter at the early vote center/election day vote center.

Alternatively, the voter may complete their mail-in ballot at home and then return it to any early vote center or election day vote Center. They do not need to wait in line at the early vote center or election day vote center when dropping off their completed mail-in ballot.

HOW TO VOTE: ABSENTEE

(in this state defined as: Absentee)

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

All registered D.C. voters will automatically be mailed a ballot to their D.C. residence. *Voters only need to request an absentee ballot if they are going to be away from their D.C. residence during the voting period, in which case the absentee ballot may be sent to another address.*

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

Requests for absentee mail-in ballots must be received no later than the 15th day before each election: <https://www.dcboe.org/voters/casting-your-vote/mail-ballot-request>. If a voter is concerned that they

may not be able to receive or cast their ballot in time for it to be counted, they should contact the D.C. Board of Elections at 202-727-2525.

51. IDENTIFICATION: Are there any identification requirements?

An individual must be a registered voter in D.C. to request an absentee ballot. The same ID requirements apply as a normal mail-in ballot. See [Question 5](#).

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

No, D.C. does not have “emergency absentee ballots.”

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

Anyone can mail the absentee ballot. The same process for returning mail ballots applies. See [Question 44](#).

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

Voters can check the status of their ballots here: <https://votedc.ballottrax.net/voter/>

If a voter is concerned that they may not be able to receive or cast their ballot in time for it to be counted, they should contact the D.C. Board of Elections at 202-727-2525.

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

See [Question 39](#) above. If an absentee application is rejected and/or an absentee ballot is rejected, please contact the D.C. Board of Elections at 202-727-2525.

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

See [Question 41](#) above.

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

Yes. See [Question 42](#) above.

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

Mailed voted ballots must be postmarked or otherwise demonstrated to have been sent on or before Election Day, and received by the D.C. Board of Elections no later than the 7th day after Election Day.

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

Not applicable.

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

Yes.

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

Please contact the D.C. Board of Elections at 202-727-2525 to request a new ballot.

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

If a voter is concerned that they may not be able to receive or cast their ballot in time for it to be counted, please contact the D.C. Board of Elections at 202-727-2525.

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

If someone receives a mail or absentee, but decides to vote in person during the Early Voting period or on Election Day, they should write "Voting in Person" on the unopened mail-in ballot. The voter can then:

- Bring the unopened mail-in ballot to the Early Vote Center or Election Day Vote Center and surrender it to an Election Worker, or
- Drop the unopened mail-in ballot into any D.C. Board of Elections mail ballot drop box

A new ballot will then be provided to the voter at the Early Vote Center/Election Day Vote Center.

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

D.C. does not permit "in-person absentee" voting. If someone receives a mail ballot but decides to vote in person during the Early Voting period or on Election Day, they should follow the procedure set forth in [Question 63](#) above.

POLLING PLACE ISSUES

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

Please contact the D.C. Board of Elections at any of the following:

D.C. Board of Elections
1015 Half Street, SE, Suite 750
Washington, DC 20003
Tel: (202) 727-2525
Tollfree: 1-866-DC-VOTES
TTY: 711 (in DC)

TTY (Text Telephone): 800-643-3768
Spanish TTY: 800-546-7111

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?

Stay in line. All voters who are in line at 8:00 pm when the polls close may cast a ballot.

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

Contact an election official at the location or contact the D.C. Board of Elections:

Tel: (202) 727-2525
Tollfree: 1-866-DC-VOTES
TTY: 711 (in DC)
TTY (Text Telephone): 800-643-3768
Spanish TTY: 800-546-7111

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

In D.C. it is against the law to (1) interfere with a person who is attempting to register or vote or (2) bribe or intimidate any voter at any place where a voter is attempting to vote.⁷

Electioneering of any kind is not allowed within 50 feet of a Voting Centers during Early Voting and on Election Day. Prohibited activities include canvassing, electioneering, circulating petitions, posting campaign materials or "any activity that interferes with the orderly conduct of the election."⁸

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

No one is permitted to distribute or post any campaign material or engage in any activity that interferes with the orderly conduct of the election within 50 feet of a Vote Center.⁹ This means that voters should not wear any candidate paraphernalia to the Vote Center. Taking photos is not prohibited.

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

Election workers cannot wear or display any candidate paraphernalia while on-duty during Early Voting or on Election Day. In addition, Election Day workers may not campaign for any elected office; hold any office in any political party or political committee; participate in the activities of or contribute to any political committee of any candidate in the District. (See <https://www.dcboe.org/faqs/election-workers>).

⁷ D.C. Code § 1-1001.12

⁸ D.C. Code § 1-1001.10 (b) (2)(A)

⁹ D.C. Code § 1-1001.10 (b) (2)(A)

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?

See [Question 68](#). If a person feels unsafe or uncomfortable outside of their Vote Center, they should contact an election official at the location or contact the D.C. Board of Elections:

Tel: (202) 727-2525
Tollfree: 1-866-DC-VOTES
TTY: 711 (in DC)
TTY (Text Telephone): 800-643-3768
Spanish TTY: 800-546-7111

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

Voters may only be challenged in writing by a registered voter. If a voter is formally challenged in writing, the precinct captain (the person overseeing the operations of the polling place) or another official in charge of the polling place will give the challenged voter an opportunity to respond.¹⁰

If the precinct captain reviews the evidence presented and decides the challenged voter is qualified, and the challenger does not appeal, the voter can vote a regular ballot. If the challenger appeals the precinct captain's decision to the D.C. Board of Elections, a hearing with the D.C. Board of Elections' hearing officer will be held by telephone; if the hearing officer decides the voter is eligible, the voter can vote a regular ballot.

If the precinct captain affirms the challenge, or the challenger appeals the precinct captain's decision and the D.C. Board of Elections' hearing officer decides the voter is not qualified, the voter will only be allowed to vote a "challenged" ballot. The D.C. Board of Elections will review the eligibility of the voter casting a challenged ballot and decide whether to count the vote or not. The D.C. Board of Elections will inform the voter of its decision and, if it decides to reject the challenged vote, the voter will have an opportunity to argue that the vote should be counted. The voter also has the right to appeal the D.C. Board of Elections' decision to the court within one business day after the date of the D.C. Board of Elections' decision.¹¹

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

Contact the D.C. Board of Elections at (202) 727-2525.

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

DC has same-day voter registration, so voters can register and vote during the early voting period or on election day. See [Question 7](#).

¹⁰ D.C. Code § 1-1001.09 (d)

¹¹ D.C. Code § 1-1001.09(d).

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

See [Question 22](#).

Voters can look up the status of their Special Ballot online (the general website can be accessed [here](#), and the link to check special ballot status should be updated in closer proximity to the general election) the day after the election to find out if their Special Ballot was counted, and if not, the reason why it was not counted. If the D.C. Board of Elections decides not to count the Special Ballot, the voter may appeal that decision by calling the Office of the General Counsel at (202) 727-2194 to schedule a hearing.

ACCESSIBILITY/ASSISTANCE

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

Yes. Voter Assistance Clerks will be on-site to help any voters who may require assistance. The D.C. Board of Elections provides numerous voting options for voters who need assistance, such as senior citizens, people with disabilities, and people who are Non-English Proficient (NEP) or Limited English Proficient (LEP). See <https://www.dcboe.org/faqs/accessible-voting-and-language-access>. A voter may bring a relative, friend, or neighbor to assist them if they are unsure of what to do at the Vote Center, or if they need assistance inside the voting booth. However, this person cannot be the voter's employer, an election observer, or union representative. In addition, Voter Assistance Clerks will also be on hand to help assist voters at every Early Voting Center and Election Day Vote Center.

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

Yes, all Voting Centers are ADA compliant and have accessible voting systems. Voter Assistance Clerks will be on-site to help any voters who may require assistance.

The ADA Coordinator facilitates requests for reasonable accommodations, responds to complaints, and ensures that all eligible voters have equal access to the voting process. Voters can reach the Contact the ADA Coordinator at ogc@dcboe.org or call (202) 727-5411 / 711 (TTY) for assistance.

The Accessible Remote Ballot (ARB) Marking System is an electronic ballot marking system that allows voters with disabilities to vote privately and independently. The ARB Marking System is compatible with all major screen readers (JAWS etc.), tactile switches, closed captioning, and audio-enabled systems. Voters can learn more about the ARB Marking System here:

[https://www.dcboe.org/voters/accessible-voting/accessible-remote-ballot-\(arb\)-marking-system](https://www.dcboe.org/voters/accessible-voting/accessible-remote-ballot-(arb)-marking-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?

Yes, D.C. Board of Elections provides numerous voting options for voters who need assistance, such as senior citizens, people with disabilities, and people who are Non-English Proficient (NEP) or Limited English Proficient (LEP). Voter Assistance Clerks will be on-site to help any voters who may require assistance.

D.C. Board of Elections provides Language Access services (sound amplifiers, translated voting material, multi-language signs/posters, foreign language and American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters) for Non-English Proficient (NEP) or Limited English Proficient (LEP) District of Columbia residents.

D.C. Board of Elections also provides language access services for voters who are limited or non-English proficient (LEP/NEP). D.C. is required to provide language assistance in Amharic, Chinese, French, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese. However, they also offer a full range of professional interpreting services via LanguageLine, more than 9,000 highly trained interpreters who are fluent in over 240 languages and American Sign Language Interpreters (ASL) for Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing constituents.

Voter can learn more about accessible voting and language assistance here:

<https://www.dcboe.org/voters/accessible-voting/accessible-voting-and-language-access>

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?

See [Question 76](#) and [Question 77](#) above for available language resources.

Yes, a voter may bring a relative, friend, or neighbor to assist them inside the voting booth. However, this person cannot be the voter's employer, an election observer, or union representative. Voter Assistance Clerks will also be on hand to assist voters at all Early Vote Center and Election Day Vote Center locations.

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

Yes. If someone is unable to enter a Vote Center due to a disability, seniority, or illness, they may arrange to vote from their car. Curbside voting is available at all Vote Center locations (See [Question 16](#) for locations).

The ADA Coordinator facilitates requests for reasonable accommodations, responds to complaints, and ensures that all eligible voters have equal access to the voting process. Voters can reach the Contact the ADA Coordinator at ogc@dcboe.org or call (202) 727-5411 / 711 (TTY) for assistance.

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

Yes, a voter may bring a Sample Ballot or notes inside the voting booth for reference. Voters should take the Sample Ballot or any notes with them after they have finished voting, and discard them in any recycling bin outside of the Early Vote Center or Election Day Vote Center.

STATE SPECIFIC SUPPLEMENT

82. NON-US CITIZEN VOTING: I am not a U.S. Citizen. Can I vote in local elections? How do I register?

Starting in 2024, qualified non-citizen D.C. residents may vote in local elections. See the D.C. Board of Elections page on non-citizen voting here: <https://www.dcboe.org/voters/register-to-vote/non-citizen>. To register to vote, you must:

- Be at least 17 years of age and be 18 years of age on or before the next General Election;
- Maintain residency in the District of Columbia for at least 30 days prior to the election in which you intend to vote;
- Not claim voting residence or the right to vote in any state, territory, or country;
- Have not been found by a court to be legally incompetent to vote.

Registration

Non-US citizen residents may register online in a separate portal found [HERE](#) <https://vr.dcboe.org/240076291295963>

Non-US citizen residents may also register by mail, fax, or email using a separate application found [HERE](#). <https://www.dcboe.org/getmedia/10b553ab-db38-4966-b948-1cd76ea68fea/VRF-Non-Citizen-YELLOW-checked-12262023.pdf>

Foreign language registration applications may be found at <https://www.dcboe.org/voters/register-to-vote/non-citizen>

For additional information on registration, see [Question 4](#).

83. **GUNS AT THE POLLING PLACE:** Are guns allowed at the polling place?

No. D.C. law specifically prohibits carrying a firearm at a polling place.¹²

84. **SOMEONE ELSE IN BOOTH:** Can I bring someone into the voting booth with me?

Yes. See <https://dcboe.org/faqs/early-voting-and-election-day>. You can bring a friend, family member, or neighbor with you into the voting booth, but that person can't be your employer, an election observer, or your union representative.

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

D.C. Board of Elections
1015 Half Street, SE, Suite 750
Washington, DC 20003
Tel: (202) 727-2525
Tollfree: 1-866-DC-VOTES (1-866-328-6837)
TTY: 711 (in DC)
TTY (Text Telephone): 800-643-3768
Spanish TTY: 800-546-7111

¹² D.C. Code § 7-2509.07 (a)(5)