Frequently Asked Questions

Georgia – General Election 2026

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

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[1] https://georgia.gov/vote-early-person
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STATE SPECIFIC SUPPLEMENT **(Anything that is particular/unique about voting in this state that is not captured elsewhere in the document.)**

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VOTER REGISTRATION

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

   To register to vote the voter must be:

   - A citizen of the United States;

- A legal resident of Georgia and of the county in which the voter wishes to vote; AND
- At least 17 1/2 years of age to register and 18 years of age to vote.[3]

A voter may NOT register to vote if the voter:

- Is currently serving a sentence for a felony conviction (very limited exceptions apply) (see Question 12); OR
- Has been ruled mentally incompetent by a court.[4]

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?

Georgia is an "open primary" state. The state of Georgia does not register voters by party and does not permit voting in more than one party's primary. Voters who wish to participate in the primary election must choose one political party's ballot. Those who want to vote but don't want to choose a party may opt for a nonpartisan ballot, which will only contain the nonpartisan races, where the candidate has not identified a party affiliation. Poll workers must ask for a voter's party affiliation in order to provide the voter with the correct ballot. A voter's choice of party in the primary election has no bearing on the voter's choices in the November general election. For example, a voter who votes in the Democratic primary may vote for a Republican candidate in the November general election, and vice versa.[5]

3. **STATUS:** Am I registered to vote? What do I need to do if my name has changed since I registered? I am listed as inactive, what does that mean and what do I need to do?

A voter can determine whether they are registered to vote by checking the "My Voter Page" on the Secretary of State's website at this link.[6]

Name Change

Voters who have a legal name change should update their voter registration information. Voters may submit a change of name by re-registering to vote. The Georgia Voter Registration Application has a "Change of Name" section (see Section 8 of the application), where applicants may notate their prior legal name.[7]

Inactive

An inactive status means that the voter has not had contact with election officials for the past 5 years. Generally, voters who have not voted in the last two general elections should receive a notice that their voter registration will be cancelled. If a voter receives a notice in the mail that their voter registration status is now inactive, they may fill out the form provided in the mail or update their information online at mvp.sos.ga.gov. Voters with an inactive status may still vote, request an absentee ballot, or sign a

[3] https://georgia.gov/register-vote
[4] https://georgia.gov/register-vote ; https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/voter-registration?IsRegisterNow=true
[5] https://www.gwinnettcounty.com/static/departments/elections/pdf/PrimaryElectionFAQs.pdf ; https://www.waltoncountyga.gov/FAQ.aspx?QID=142
[6] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/
[7] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/resource/1648789623000/GAOLVR

petition. Voters can change their inactive status back to active by simply voting, requesting an absentee ballot, signing a petition, or updating their voter information, including a change of address.[8] A voter can also change their status to active by updating their address on the "My Voter Page" on the Secretary of State's website at this link;[9] or by signing a petition.[10]

If a voter on the "inactive" list does not vote, request a mail-in ballot, sign a petition, or update their voter registration address for two general election cycles, then the voter's registration will be cancelled and the person will then have to re-register to vote.[11]

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

Georgians who have a valid Georgia Driver's License or an identification card issued by the Georgia Department of Driver Services may register to vote (1) online using the Georgia Secretary of State's online voter registration system, which is available at this link;[12] (2) in person at their County Registrar's office; or (3) by mail by completing and mailing a voter registration form.

Georgians who do not have a valid Georgia Driver's License or identification card issued by the Georgia Department of Driver Services may register to vote (1) in person at their County Registrar's office, or (2) by mail by completing and mailing a voter registration form.

Voter registration is also offered when a Georgia resident renews or applies for a driver's license at the Department of Driver Services.[13]

Registering to vote in person: Georgians may register to vote in person at their County Registrar's office (also referred to as a County Election Office). A list of County Registrar's offices is available at this link.[14]

Registering to vote by mail: The Georgia Voter Registration Application may be downloaded from the Georgia Secretary of State's website at this link: https://sos.ga.gov/voter-resources.[15] Scroll down below the "Register Now" button to the text that reads, "Register to vote by printing and mailing the application." The applicant may complete the form online and then print the completed form by clicking the link entitled "Processed for Pre-Fill Application." Alternatively, the applicant may print a blank application by clicking the link entitled "Download Blank PDF."

The National Mail Voter Registration Form and the Georgia state specific instructions for completing the form can be found at this link.[16]

Georgians may also go to their public library, public assistance office, military recruitment office, public schools, and certain other government offices to obtain a mail-in voter registration form.[17] College

[8] https://sos.ga.gov/voter-resources (see the links for "Inactive Voter" and "Active Voter" under the "Quick Voter Links" menu); O.C.G.A. § 21-2-235 (titled "Inactive list of electors").
[9] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/.
[10] https://sos.ga.gov/voter-resources (see the links for "Inactive Voter" and "Active Voter" under the "Quick Voter Links" menu); O.C.G.A. § 21-2-235 (titled "Inactive list of electors").
[11] https://sos.ga.gov/voter-resources (see the links for "Inactive Voter" and "Active Voter" under the "Quick Voter Links" menu); O.C.G.A. § 21-2-235 (titled "Inactive list of electors").
[12] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/olvr-home#no-back-button
[13] https://www.columbiacountyga.gov/573/Voter-Registration ; https://www.columbiacountyga.gov/573/Voter-Registration
[14] https://georgia.gov/locate-county-registrars-office
[15] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/olvr-home#no-back-button ; https://sos.ga.gov/how-to-guide/how-guide-registering-vote
[16] https://www.eac.gov/voters/national-mail-voter-registration-form
[17] https://www.columbiacountyga.gov/573/Voter-Registration *See also generally* 52 U.S.C. § 20506 (provisions of the National Voter Registration Act addressing the requirements for states to designate voter registration agencies at which the state's mail voter registration application must be available).

students can obtain Georgia voter registration forms from their school registrar's office or from the office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs.[18] If an applicant plans to register to vote by downloading and mailing in the Georgia voter registration form or the National Mail Voter Registration Form, the applicant will need access to a printer to print out the form.

Due to potential closures, state and federal holidays and other restrictions, Georgians should call ahead to confirm when offices and facilities will be open for voter registration and whether an appointment is required.

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

To register to vote, Georgians must provide their (1) Georgia Driver's License number or (2) the number of their Georgia identification card issued by the Georgia Department of Driver Services (a "Georgia State issued ID"). If an individual does not have a Georgia Driver's License or a Georgia State issued ID, they must provide at least the last four digits of their Social Security number. Providing their full Social Security number is optional.

If an individual does not have a Georgia Driver's License, a Georgia State issued ID or a Social Security number, the Georgia Voter Registration Application provides the option to check a box (see Section 5 of the application) and a unique identifier will be created for the voter.[19]

Note: First-time voters who register to vote by mail and who do not provide a Georgia's Driver's License number, a Georgia State issued ID number, or the last four digits of their Social Security number must submit proof of residence either with their voter registration application or when they vote for the first time. Proof of residence includes any one of the following: a copy of a current and valid photo identification that is acceptable as voter identification (see Question 19); or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows the voter's name and address.[20]

Applicants with a valid Georgia Driver's License or identification card issued by the Georgia Department of Driver Services may register to vote online at this link.[21]

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?

Voters must be registered to vote at least 30 days before an election to vote in that election.[22] The deadlines are the same regardless of whether an individual registers to vote by mail, online or in person. If an individual registers to vote by mail, the application must be postmarked at least 30 days before the election.[23]

[18] https://www.columbiacountyga.gov/573/Voter-Registration
[19] State of Georgia Application for Voter Registration, Instructions for Item 5, https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/GA_VR_APP_2019.pdf
[20] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-417(c).
[21] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/olvr-home#no-back-button
[22] https://sos.ga.gov/page/elections-faq. The statute provides that a voter registration application must be submitted by the close of business on the fifth Monday before the election, or, if such Monday is a legal holiday, by the close of business on the following business day. O.C.G.A. § 21-2-224(a).
[23] The statute provides that a Voter Registration Application submitted by mail is "deemed to have been made as of the date of the postmark affixed to such application by the United States Postal Service." O.C.G.A. § 21-2-224(c).

The voter registration deadline for local and state runoff elections is the same as the voter registration deadline for the election which led to the runoff. As a result, voters who were not registered in time to vote in the local or state election that led to the runoff are not eligible to register and vote in the runoff for that election.

In the case of Congressional runoff elections (i.e., *only* U.S. House and Senate runoffs), voters must be registered to vote by the fifth Monday preceding the runoff election in order to vote in the runoff election.

2026 general elections:[24]

- The voter registration deadline to vote in the November 3, 2026 general election is **October 5, 2026**.
- The voter registration deadline for the December 1, 2026 state and local runoff elections is **October 5, 2026**.
- The voter registration deadline for the December 1, 2026 *federal* runoff elections is **November 2, 2026**.

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

The State of Georgia does **not** have same-day registration.

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

Refer to the table below. The answer to this question depends on whether the voter moved within the same county/election jurisdiction or moved to a new county and when that move occurred.

Moved within the same precinct:	**Moved to a different precinct but within the same county:**	**Moved to a different county within Georgia:**	**Moved from a different state:**

[24] https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/2026%20Elections%20Calendar%20Summary.pdf

Voters should go to the same precinct if they have moved within the same precinct. They will need to fill out a change of address form when they go to vote.	Voters should go to their old precinct. They will be able to vote at their old precinct but will need to fill out a change of address form for the next election when they go to vote.[25]	If a registered voter moved to a different county in Georgia **within 30 days** prior to an election, the voter should vote at their old precinct in their old county one last time and update their address information when they go to vote. If the voter moved out of the county where they were registered to vote **more than 30 days prior** to an election, they are required to register to vote in the county of their new residence by the voter registration deadline for that election. Otherwise, they will not be eligible to vote in that election and must re-register to vote for the next election. [26]	It depends on when the voter moved. If the voter moved to Georgia **on or prior to the last day to register to vote** in an election, they may register to vote using their new place of address as long as the voter registers by the deadline. If they moved to Georgia **after the close of registration for an election**, they will not be eligible to vote in that election because the registration deadline has passed. **There is an exception for an election in which the president and vice president are on the ballot.** In that case, if they moved to Georgia after the close of voter registration, they should contact the election official in their former state to request an absentee ballot that will permit them to vote for the candidates for president and vice president only one last time.[27]

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

   A voter must vote at a polling place designated for the location where they are registered to vote (i.e., their primary residence). If a voter wishes to vote by mail ballot (also known as an absentee ballot) for any reason, including because they are going to be temporarily away from the address where they are registered to vote, a voter can apply for a mail ballot (absentee ballot) and request that the ballot be sent to the address where they are temporarily staying or other address of their choice. Voters can begin applying for mail ballots (absentee ballots) up to 78 days prior to an election and the final deadline to apply for an absentee ballot is 11 days prior to the election.[28] Note that the voter should request the mail ballot (absentee ballot) as soon as possible to ensure that there is sufficient time for them to receive and return the ballot so that it is received by the voter's County Registrar by no later than 7:00 p.m. on Election Day. For information on requesting a mail ballot (absentee ballot) see Question 31 below.

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?

[25] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-218(c). See https://www.accgov.com/242/Voter-Change-of-Residence ; https://www.jeffersoncountyga.gov/FAQ.aspx?QID=72

[26] See https://www.accgov.com/242/Voter-Change-of-Residence ; https://www.jeffersoncountyga.gov/FAQ.aspx?QID=72

[27] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-216(e); 52 U.S.C.A. § 10502(c).

[28] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-381(a)(1)(A).

College students who meet the generally applicable registration requirements may register to vote in Georgia if they have "residence" in Georgia, defined as a place where their habitation is fixed without any present intention to move.[29]

This means a college student can register to vote at the address they consider to be the place where they are residing without any present intention to move.

College students may only be registered to vote and may only vote in one location. As such, a voter must be registered to vote in the county and state where they have the current intention to reside (live without any current intention of moving), whether that's at school, home, or somewhere else.

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

A Georgia voter who is living abroad, as well as any Georgia voter who is a uniformed service member or a spouse or child of a uniformed service member, can use the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) to register to vote and to request an absentee ballot. They may make one single request to receive absentee ballots for all primaries, runoffs, and general elections involving federal candidates, and any other elections for which they are eligible, for a period extending through the next regularly scheduled general election. Even if the voter is already registered to vote, they can still use the FPCA to request absentee ballots.

A voter must complete, sign, and submit the Federal Postcard Application to their County Registrar's office via email (as an attachment), fax, or U.S. mail. The Federal Postcard Application is available on the Georgia Secretary of State's website at this link.[30] Voters with questions about overseas voting can email the Secretary of State at UOCAVA@sos.ga.gov.[31]

12. **CRIMINAL CONVICTION:** I have a felony criminal conviction. Can I register to vote? Does the type of conviction matter? Are there any restrictions after any misdemeanor convictions? What process (if any) is needed to restore my right to vote if it was impacted?

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

- A person convicted only of a misdemeanor offense;
- A person awaiting trial;
- A person who pled nolo contendere to an offense;[32]
- A person who was sentenced under the First Offender Act or was given a conditional discharge and their sentence has not been revoked by a judge;[33]
- A person who completed their sentence for a felony conviction, including any period of incarceration, parole, probation, and repayment of fines that were not cancelled;[34]
- A person who was adjudicated in a juvenile court.[35]

[29] O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-216(a)(4); 21-2-217(a)(1).
[30] https://sos.ga.gov/page/military-and-overseas-voting
[31] https://sos.ga.gov/page/military-and-overseas-voting
[32] O.C.G.A. § 17-7-95(c).
[33] O.C.G.A. § 16-13-2 (Conditional Discharge only available for drug offenses); *id.* § 42-8-60 (First Offender Act does not apply to serious violent felonies, sexual offenses, DUI offenses, offenses involving disabled and elderly people, and offenses against law enforcement officers, among other exclusions).
[34] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/voter-registration?IsRegisterNow=true.
[35] *See Carrindine v. Ricketts*, 223 S.E.2d 627, 628-29 (Ga. 1976); *In re J.W.*, 711 S.E. 2d 48, 49 (Ga. App. 2011); *Interest of M.F.*, 828 S.E.2d 350, 351 (Ga. 2019).

The following individuals are ineligible to vote:

- A person convicted of a felony offense who has not completed their sentence, including all terms of probation, parole, and repayment of fines owed (see below on fines);[36]
- A person convicted of a felony offense under the First Offender Act or was given a conditional discharge and their sentence was revoked by a judge.

Once a person has completed a sentence for a felony conviction, the right to vote is automatically restored and a person will have to re-register to vote.

Fines and fees: A person is considered to have completed their felony conviction sentence after all fines are paid, unless such fines are cancelled upon the completion of incarceration, probation, or parole.[37] Fines may be imposed "as a condition of probation." These fines are automatically canceled when a person completes probation, so these fines do not have to first be paid back in order for a person to be eligible to vote.[38] All other unpaid monetary obligations, including restitution, fees, costs, and surcharges,[39] do not prevent a person's right to vote from being restored.[40]

A voter does not need to provide anything to prove that they have completed their sentence. If a voter is unsure whether they have completed their sentence, or if they would like proof of sentence completion, they can contact their original or local Georgia Department of Community Supervision probation office to request a Certificate of Sentence Completion and Discharge.[41]

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

Only eligible voters may register and vote from jail. See Question 12 for more information on whether an incarcerated person may or may not be eligible to vote.

Eligible incarcerated voters may vote via an absentee ballot. If voters want to vote from the jail, voters should apply for their absentee ballots and include the jail's address as the temporary mailing address. Mailing addresses on the application should include voters' inmate numbers to expedite the mailing process at correctional facilities. The absentee ballot of a voter may be mailed, or delivered by any employee of such jail or facility having custody of such voter.[42] Jail officials must give eligible incarcerated

[36] Ga. Const. art. 2, § 1, ¶ III; O.C.G.A. § 21-2-216(b). Although Georgia statutes only restrict the right to vote for felony offenses involving "moral turpitude," the Georgia Supreme Court has held that any felony conviction is a crime that involves moral turpitude. *See Lewis v. State*, 254 S.E.2d 830, 832 (Ga. 1979).
[37] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/voter-registration?IsRegisterNow=true.
[38] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/voter-registration?IsRegisterNow=true.
[39] Fines are generally monetary obligations authorized by a criminal offense's statute. Restitution is "any property, lump sum, or periodic payment ordered to be made by any offender or other person to any victim by any ordering authority." O.C.G.A. § 17-14-2(7). Fees are obligations intended to recover financial costs associated with the criminal justice system, and they may include attorney fees. Costs are the financial obligations owed to a court system for its administration (e.g., filing fees, transcript fees, clerk fees). *See* O.C.G.A. § 17-11-1; *Pless v. State*, 633 S.E.2d 340, 348 (Ga. App. 2006) ("Under Georgia law, generally '[c]osts' does not include attorney fees.'"). Surcharges are statutory base fines designed to benefit employees and victims in the criminal justice system. *See* O.C.G.A. § 15-6-95 (types of programs applying surcharges).
[40] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/voter-registration?IsRegisterNow=true.
[41] https://www.gjp.org/voting/ (see the response to the question, "I'm off paper, but they still tell me I can't register. What can I do?"); https://gjp.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/2022.3.21-Flyer-on-Certificate-of-Sentence-Completion.pdf
[42] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-385(a).

voters access to their personal effects, i.e., identification documents, in order to apply for and vote by mail.[43]

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

Georgia law permits registered voters in a county to challenge the eligibility of other voters in the same county to remain on the voter registration list or to vote in an upcoming election. Challenges must be made in writing and specify the grounds of the challenge. Challenges are presented to the Board of Registrars. There is no limit to the number of voters that another voter may challenge. Voters may not be challenged for the first time upon arriving to vote at the polls (but a voter may learn of a challenge that was previously filed when they attempt to vote).[44]

Where a voter's right to remain on the voter registration list is being challenged (called a "Section 229" challenge), the challenger bears the burden of proof and the board of registrars must send written notice of a hearing on the challenge to both the voter and the challenger within ten days of receipt of the challenge.[45] The person being challenged must receive at least three days' notice of the date, time and place of the hearing.[46] After the hearing, the board of registrars must decide whether or not the person can remain on the voter registration list and inform the parties.[47] Both the voter and challenger have the right to file an appeal within ten days of the board of registrar's final determination of such challenges in the superior court.[48]

Where a voter's right to vote in an upcoming election is being challenged (called a "Section 230" challenge), the challenger must establish probable cause[49] for the challenge.[50] In the case of such Section 230 challenges, the board of registrars is required to "immediately" determine whether the challenger has established probable cause for the challenge.[51] If the board of registrars determines probable cause has been established for the challenge, the voter is put into "challenged" status and the voter must produce evidence demonstrating that they are eligible to vote if they vote absentee by mail or appear to vote in person during advanced voting or on election day. If the challenge is based on the grounds that the voter is not qualified to remain on the voter rolls, and the challenged voter does not seek to vote, the board of registrars treats the challenge as if it is challenging the right of the voter to remain on the elector's list and will send notice of a challenge hearing to the voter and challenger as described in the preceding paragraph as a "Section 229" challenge. [52]

If a voter is in "challenged" status and is still eligible to vote in the county where they are registered, the voter should contact their county registrar to determine what the alleged basis is for the challenge and how the voter can cure the challenge so that they can cast a mail ballot (also known as an absentee ballot) or vote in person. If a challenged voter appears in person to vote, but does not bring proof of

[43] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-381(a)(1)(D).
[44] O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-229(a), 21-2-230(a, b).
[45] O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-229.
[46] O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-229(b).
[47] O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-229(d).
[48] O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-229(e).
[49] Probable causes include the following evidence: the death of the voter; the voter voting or registering to vote in a different jurisdiction; or the voter being registered at a nonresidential address. Information regarding a voter's change of residency based on the National Change of Address data base, maintained by the United States Postal Service, is not sufficient probable cause. O.C.G.A. § 21-2-230(b).
[50] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-230.
[51] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-230(b).
[52] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-230(g).

their eligibility to vote to the polls, they will be required to vote a provisional ballot and produce proof of their eligibility to the board of registrars by no later than the cure deadline, which is 3 days after Election Day.[53] If there is a state or federal holiday during the cure period, the deadline is extended to the next business day.[54]

HOW TO VOTE: ELECTION DAY

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

    The polls must be open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Eastern time on Election Day. **Voters in line by 7:00 p.m. must be allowed to cast a ballot.** A voter who is in line by 7:00 p.m. must not leave the line until they have cast their ballot.[55]

    For questions relating to early voting (also known as advanced voting or advanced in person voting), refer to Question 25 (Is there early voting in my state?), Question 26 (Do I need a reason to vote early?), Question 27 (When does early voting begin/end?), Question 28 (Where do I vote during early voting?), Question 29 (What identification is required for early voting?), and Question 30 (What if I need assistance voting early in person?).

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

    A voter can determine their proper Election Day polling place by checking the Secretary of State's My Voter Page website here.[56]

    Advanced Voting times and locations may be found on the Secretary of State's website here.[57]

    If a voter has moved recently and has not updated their voter registration, refer to Question 8 and Question 9.

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

    Employers are required to allow an employee up to two hours of time off from work to vote on Election Day or on one of the days designated for in-person early voting (also known as advanced voting). The employee must give "reasonable notice" to the employer of the employee's need for time off to vote. The law does not require that this notice be in writing. The employer may specify the hours during which an employee may take time off to vote.[58]

[53] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-230(g).
[54] This is the 2025-2026 calendar of holidays observed by the state: https://team.georgia.gov/all-articles/state-georgia-holiday-schedule.
[55] https://georgia.gov/vote-in-person-election-day
[56] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/
[57] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/advanced-voting-location-information
[58] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-404. Note that under a prior version of the law, employees could not take time off to vote if the employee's work hours began at least 2 hours after the polls opened or ended at least 2 hours before the polls closed. This limitation no longer applies.

Some employers may still compensate employees who take voting leave.[59] However the employer is not required to pay the employee for the time taken off from work to vote. Employees should check with their employer if they have questions about whether their individual employer will compensate them.

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

Voters who are in line by 7:00 p.m. must be allowed to cast a ballot. A voter in line by 7:00 p.m. must not leave the line until they have cast their ballot.[60]

In the **City of Atlanta municipal elections only**, polls close at 8:00 p.m.[61]

In some cases, courts may order particular polling places to remain open later than the mandated closing time due to delays, equipment malfunctions or for other reasons occurring on Election Day.[62] In elections where there is a federal candidate on the ballot, persons who vote after the regular poll closing time because of a court order extending the time for the poll to close will vote by a provisional ballot. Those ballots will count as a vote so long as the voter is otherwise eligible to vote at the polling location which is the subject of the poll hour extension order. If a federal candidate is not on the ballot and a voter casts a ballot after the regular poll closing time because of a court order extending the closing time, the voter should receive a regular ballot and not be required to vote a provisional ballot.[63]

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

Georgia requires a photo ID in order to vote. Note: certain first time Georgia voters who registered to vote by mail or through a third-party voter registration drive will also need to show additional forms of non-photo IDs to vote, as described below.

Acceptable forms of photo ID are:[64]

- A physical Georgia driver's license, even if expired. A digital license will not be accepted.
- Any valid state or federal government-issued photo ID, including a free Georgia voter ID card issued by the voter's County Registrar's office or the Georgia Department of Driver Services (DDS);[65]
- A valid U.S. passport;
- A valid employee photo ID from any branch, department, agency, or entity of the U.S. Government, Georgia, or any county, municipality, board, authority, or other entity of the state of Georgia;
- A valid U.S. military photo ID containing a photograph of the voter;
- A valid tribal photo ID containing a photograph of the voter; or

[59] See State Personnel Board R. 478-1-.16(12)(a), https://www.doas.ga.gov/sites/default/files/assets/Human%20Resources%20Administration/NEADocumentLibrary/SPB%20Rule_Voting%20Leave.pdf (authorizing paid leave for some employees, depending on when their work day starts).
[60] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-413(g).
[61] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-403(a) (authorizing all cities with a population of 300,000 or more to have their polls remain open until 8:00 P.M.).
[62] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-403(b).
[63] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-418(d).
[64] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-417(a) (effective July 1, 2025 under HB 296, a Georgia driver's license must be presented "in a physical format"); *see also* https://sos.ga.gov/page/georgia-voter-identification-requirements.
[65] https://dds.georgia.gov/voter

- A valid student ID from a Georgia Public College, University or Technical College.[66] **Please check the list of eligible colleges and universities. Student IDs from private colleges, universities and technical colleges are not valid as acceptable photo ID for voting.**

The legal name on the photo ID should match the voter's name as listed on their voter registration. The address on the ID **does not** have to match the address at which the voter is registered to vote.

A voter who does not have a photo ID when they go to the polls may vote a provisional ballot. In order for the provisional ballot to count, the voter must present a photo ID to the County Registrar's office within 3 days after Election Day or the provisional ballot will not count.[67]

Special rules for first-time voters: First-time voters should be advised to bring both proof of residence AND a photo ID with them when they go to vote.[68]

- First-time voters who register to vote by mail and who do not provide a Georgia's Driver's License number, Georgia identification card number, or the last four digits of their Social Security number on their application must submit proof of residence either with their voter registration application or when they vote for the first time.
- Proof of residence includes any one of the following: a copy of a current and valid photo identification valid for voting (see above); or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows the voter's name and address.[69]
- A first-time voter must also bring proof of residence when they go to vote for the first time if the Georgia Driver's License number, the number of the Georgia identification card issued by the Georgia Department of Driver Services, or Social Security number they provided was not verifiable using a state database.

Documentary Proof of Citizenship: If a voter's registration is in "pending" status for citizenship verification, the voter must produce an acceptable form of proof of U.S. citizenship to a poll manager when they go to vote for the first time, or to their County Registrar's office before they request a ballot in order to be able to vote a regular ballot. A link to the list of acceptable proof of citizenship documents for those in "pending" status for proof of citizenship can be accessed here.[70] A voter whose registration status is pending for citizenship verification and who does not have proof of citizenship when they go to vote may vote a provisional ballot. In order for the provisional ballot to count, the voter must present proof of U.S. citizenship to the County Registrar's office within 3 days after Election Day or the provisional ballot will not count.[71]

Name change: See Question 3 for details on updating a voter registration if a voter has changed their name. If the voter has changed their name, including because of marriage, divorce, the death of a partner or spouse, or for any other reason, they should update their voter registration record on or before the deadline to register to vote for an upcoming election to help ensure their County Registrar's office has their correct name in the system for an upcoming election. If the voter's name on their photo

[66] https://sos.ga.gov/page/georgia-colleges-and-universities
[67] O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-417(b); 21-2-419(c)(1).
[68] See the "Requirement" warning in orange on the voter registration application, available at https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/GA_VR_APP_2019.pdf. Note that this requirement to provide proof of residence does not apply to individuals who are entitled to vote by absentee ballot under the Uniform and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act. *See also the following primary sources:* O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-417(c), 21-2-220(c).
[69] See the "Requirement" warning in orange on the voter registration application, available at https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/GA_VR_APP_2019.pdf.
[70] https://sos.ga.gov/page/proof-citizenship
[71] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-419(c)(1).

ID does not match the name on their voter registration because of a name change, the voter should contact their County Registrar's office before going to the polling place to confirm what documentation the voter should bring to the polls to confirm the voter's name change, i.e., marriage certificate, court order, death certificate, updated driver's license, state ID or other forms of acceptable photo ID bearing the voter's updated name. If the voter does not bring an acceptable form of ID with their updated name on it, they may be asked to cast a provisional ballot.

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

A voter without the forms of identification described in Question 19 above may vote a provisional ballot. In order for the provisional ballot to count, the voter must present a qualifying photo ID to the County Registrar's office within 3 days after election day or the provisional ballot will not count.[72]

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

A voter's name can be removed from the list of registered voters by their written request; after having been adjudicated mentally incompetent or convicted of a felony offense; in the event the voter registers to vote in another state; after the voter's death; or in connection with a voter registration list maintenance program.[73] Any voter whose name was removed and who subsequently becomes eligible to vote must re-register in order to have their name restored to the statewide voter registration system.

If a voter calls saying that they are not on the voter registration roll at their polling place, check the "My Voter Page" on the Secretary of State's website at this link.[74]

- Make sure that the voter is registered to vote and is at the right polling place.
- Ask whether the voter has moved recently. Could they be registered at an old address? Check that address in the "My Voter Page" at this link.[75] (See Question 8 for the rules on voting after a move)
- Asked whether the voter changed their name recently, or whether they could be registered under a different name. Check that name (and any variations of the voter's name, especially for hyphenated names) in the "My Voter Page" at this link.[76]
- Inquire when and where the voter registered to vote. Was that before the voter registration deadline? (See Question 6 for the voter registration deadlines.)
- Find out when the caller last voted at their polling place.
    - If it has been several years since they last voted at their polling place, it is possible that the individual was marked as an "inactive" voter and then removed from the voter registration roll after not having contact with election officials for two election cycles.[77]

[72] O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-417(b); 21-2-419(c)(1).
[73] O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-232; 21-2-228; 21-2-216.
[74] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/
[75] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/
[76] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/
[77] https://sos.ga.gov/voter-resources (see the links for "Inactive Voter" and "Active Voter" under the "Quick Voter Links" menu); O.C.G.A. § 21-2-235 (titled "Inactive list of electors").

- Ask whether the individual has ever been convicted of a felony. An individual who is convicted of a felony will be removed from the voter registration roll and will be required to re-register after sentence completion. (See Question 12.)

It is possible that the voter may have been erroneously removed from the voter registration roll during a voter registration list maintenance process, which the Secretary of State uses to remove voters who have moved out of state.[78] The voter should contact their County Registrar's office to find out if this may be the case and, if so, how to resolve the problem.

The answer as to whether the voter can vote will depend on the reason why the voter's name is not on the voter registration roll. *Note:* If the caller is ineligible to vote for any reason (for example, the caller did not register to vote in time), please do *not* advise the caller to vote a provisional ballot. (See Question 23.) If a voter registered to vote close in time to the voter registration deadline and the poll worker does not find the voter on the electronic poll book when the voter checks in, it is possible that there was a delay in processing the voter registration application and that the voter's information did not make it into the electronic poll book by the deadline for uploading the voter registration information to the poll book. Each polling place is required to have a supplemental electronic or paper poll book at each polling place which should have the information for voters who registered by the voter registration deadline but whose information was not uploaded to the electronic poll book by the production deadline. Voters should be instructed to ask the poll official if they can check the supplemental poll book. If the voter is sure they are eligible to vote, submitted their registration by the deadline, and is not appearing on the electronic or supplemental poll book, they should be instructed to request and vote a provisional ballot. (See Question 22).

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

A voter may be offered a provisional ballot when:

1. The voter's name does not appear on the list of registered electors (see Question 21). If a voter votes a provisional ballot because their name did not appear on the list of registered voters in the precinct, the County Registrar's office has up to three days after the election to determine if the voter was properly registered to vote in that election. Votes will only count for eligible voters.[79]
2. The voter does not have the required ID or proof of citizenship (if applicable) (see Question 19). A voter who is offered a provisional ballot because of a lack of proper identification or proof of citizenship must provide the County Registrar's office with qualifying identification or proof of citizenship within three business days of the election in order for the provisional ballot to count.[80]
3. The voter's eligibility has been challenged, a hearing on the challenge has not yet been held, and the voter does not have documentation on hand to prove their eligibility to vote in response to the challenge (see Question 14).

[78] See https://sos.ga.gov/news/raffensperger-continues-summer-election-integrity-audit-cross-state-data-accuracy-mailing
[79] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-419(c).
[80] O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-417(b); 21-2-419(c)(1).

4. The voting machines at the polling place malfunction or a court orders the polling place to stay open past the official closing time (in which case this will be an "emergency" provisional ballot). If a voter is given a provisional ballot because a court ordered an extension of the poll closing time, or if a voter must vote an emergency paper ballot due to a machine malfunction, the voter does not need to do anything further to make sure the ballot counts.
5. The voter goes to a polling place in the wrong precinct but in the correct county after 5:00 p.m. on the date of the election, and is not able to get to their correct polling place before the close of the polls at 7:00 p.m. The voter will have to sign a sworn statement witnessed by a poll official stating that they cannot get to their correct polling place before the polls close at 7:00 p.m. in order for a ballot cast at the incorrect polling place after 5:00 p.m. to be counted as a vote. Only the votes for candidates for which they were entitled to vote will be counted, and they will be notified in writing that their ballot was partially counted for the correct precinct. Important note: voters who vote at an incorrect polling place before 5:00 p.m. will not have their ballot counted. Thus, it is important that those voters go to their correct polling place before the close of their correct poll at 7:00 p.m. in order to cast a ballot that will count as a vote. If a voter goes to an incorrect polling place after 5:00 p.m. but is able to go to their correct polling place before the close of the polls at 7:00 p.m., they should be told that they must go to their correct polling place to vote.[81]

The voter can track the status of their provisional ballot on the "My Voter Page" on the Secretary of State's website at this link.[82]

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

A voter should only vote a provisional ballot for one of the reasons listed in Question 22 above and the voter believes in good faith that they are eligible to vote. If a voter is not registered to vote, failed to register to vote before the voter registration deadline, or moved to a different county more than 30 days prior to the election and did not update their voter registration, then the voter should not vote a provisional ballot.

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

A voter who is offered a provisional ballot because of a lack of proper identification or proof of citizenship must provide the County Registrar's office with qualifying identification or proof of citizenship within 3 business days of the election in order for the provisional ballot to count.[83]

If a voter casts a provisional ballot because a court ordered an extension of the poll closing time or if the voter was given an emergency paper ballot due to a machine malfunction, the voter does not need to do anything further to make sure the ballot counts.

If a voter casts a provisional ballot because their name did not appear on the list of registered voters in the precinct, or if the voter voted a provisional ballot because the voter's eligibility to vote was challenged (see Question 14), the voter should contact their County Registrar's office to determine what they need to provide (e.g., photo ID, proof of residence, or proof of citizenship) to prove that they were

[81] O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-419(c)(2), 21-2-418(b).
[82] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/
[83] O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-417(b); 21-2-419(c)(1).

eligible to vote in the election. The County Registrar's office has up to 3 days after the election to determine if the voter was properly registered to vote in that election.[84]

If a voter is offered a provisional ballot because the voter appeared at an incorrect polling place in the wrong precinct but in the correct county after 5:00 p.m. on Election Day, the voter's ballot will only count if the voter is eligible to vote and signs a sworn statement attesting that they cannot get to their correct polling place by close of polls at 7:00 p.m. Only the votes for candidates for which they were entitled to vote will be counted.[85] The voter will be notified in writing that their ballot was partially counted for the correct precinct.[86]

Voters who voted prior to 5:00 pm on Election Day at an incorrect polling place in the wrong precinct but in the correct county will not have their ballot counted.[87] Thus, it is important that those voters go to their correct polling place before the close of their correct poll at 7:00 p.m. in order to cast a ballot that will count as a vote. If a voter goes to the incorrect polling place after 5:00 p.m. but is able to go to their correct polling place before the close of the polls at 7:00 p.m., they should be told that they must go to their correct polling place to vote. If the voter goes to an incorrect polling place in the wrong precinct but in the correct county after 5:00 p.m., but is not able to get to their correct polling place before the close of the poll at 7:00 p.m., they will have to sign a sworn statement witnessed by a poll official stating that they cannot get to their correct polling place before the poll closes at 7:00 p.m. in order for a ballot cast at the incorrect polling place after 5:00 p.m. to be counted as a vote.

A voter can track the status of their provisional ballot on the "My Voter Page" on the Secretary of State's website at this link. [88]

HOW TO VOTE: IN-PERSON EARLY VOTING

(In this state defined as: In-person early voting is sometimes referred to as Advanced in Person (AIP) voting.[89] It is also sometimes referred to as "Advanced Voting" or "Early Voting")

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

    Yes. Early voting, also referred to in Georgia as, "Advanced Voting," "Early Voting," or "Advanced In Person (AIP) Voting," allows registered voters to vote early at specified sites in their county.[90]

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

[84] O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-417(b); 21-2-419(c)(1).
[85] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-419(c)(2).
[86] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-419(d)(2).
[87] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-419(c)(2).
[88] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/
[89] https://georgia.gov/vote-early-person
[90] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-385(d)(1); https://georgia.gov/vote-early-person.

No. Any voter can vote early for any reason in Georgia.

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

All Georgia counties are required to offer Advanced In Person (AIP) Voting (also known as "Advanced Voting" or "Early Voting") beginning on the fourth Monday prior to a primary or election, and as soon as possible prior to a runoff election; and ending on the Friday immediately prior to the date of the election.[91]

Advanced in Person (AIP) Voting (also known as "Advanced Voting" or "Early Voting") takes place Monday through Friday, and on the second and third Saturdays before Election Day. Some polling locations may be open on the second and third Sundays before Election Day. Polling locations are typically open from 9 am to 5 pm on weekdays, and from 9 am to 4 pm on Saturdays but exact hours may vary.[92]

County election officials have the discretion to set longer hours for early voting. Voters should check early voting hours and locations before going to vote. Voters can obtain a list of early voting locations and hours on the "My Voter Page" on the Secretary of State's website at this link. [93]

Early voting locations and hours for each county are also posted on the Secretary of State's website at this link.[94] *Note*: Be sure to select the correct election from the dropdown menu on this page before checking early voting locations and hours.

Early voting dates for the 2026 elections are as follows:[95]

- **General Election:** Early voting for the November 3, 2026 general primary election runs from **October 13, 2026 until October 30, 2026**.[96]
    - All counties must offer early voting on Saturday, October 17, 2026 and Saturday, October 24, 2026.
    - Counties have the option to offer early voting on Sunday, October 18, 2026 and Sunday, October 25, 2026.

28. **WHERE:** Where do I vote during Advanced in Person (AIP) Voting (also known as "Advanced Voting" or "Early Voting")?

Voters can vote early at any early voting location in their county of residence. On Election Day, however, voters must go to their assigned polling place. (*Note*: sometimes voters will mistakenly go to the polling place they typically go to on Election Day. Not all polling places are open for early voting.)

[91] https://georgia.gov/vote-early-person; O.C.G.A. § 21-2-385(d)(1).
[92] https://georgia.gov/vote-early-person
[93] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/
[94] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/advanced-voting-location-information
[95] https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/2026%20Elections%20Calendar.pdf; https://georgia.gov/vote-early-person
[96] https://www.glynncounty.org/government/departments/elections-voter-registration/information-about-voting-registration/election-year-calendars; https://morgancountyga.gov/388/Election-Calendar

Voters can obtain a list of early voting locations and hours on the "My Voter Page" on the Secretary of State's website at this link.[97]

Early voting locations and hours for each county are also posted on the Secretary of State's website at this link.[98] *Note*: Be sure to select the correct election from the dropdown menu on this page before checking early voting locations and hours.

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

See Question 19.

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

A voter can receive assistance voting if they are unable to sign their name, see or mark the ballot, operate the voting equipment, or enter the voting booth without assistance. A voter may choose any person to help them except for:

- The voter's employer or an agent of the voter's employer;
- An officer or agent of the voter's union;
- Any candidate on the ballot; or
- Any candidate's spouse, child, sibling, parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, grandchild, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, or sister-in-law.

A voter needing assistance must give the poll worker the name of the person assisting them or write it on their voter certificate.[99]

Any voter who is disabled and requires assistance in voting may vote immediately at the next available voting compartment or booth without having to wait in line.[100]

Georgia's paper-ballot voting system offers a range of accessibility devices and options to accommodate various disabilities. A list of adaptive devices is available on the Secretary of State's website at this link.[101] Headsets are available so voters can hear their choices read to them. Large controls are available for voters with limited mobility, and they can accommodate sip-and-puff devices. Voters who are visually impaired may use an app on their phone to read their ballot to them before they cast it. Before the voter leaves the polling place, the voter must delete any photos of their ballot necessary to read it.[102]

For a voter requiring reading/language access assistance see Question 78 and Question 79.

[97] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/
[98] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/advanced-voting-location-information
[99] https://sos.ga.gov/page/voting-assistance-people-disabilities (see the box entitled "Voting Information" and look at the information for "In-Person Voting Assistance"); O.C.G.A. § 21-2-409.
[100] https://sos.ga.gov/page/voting-assistance-people-disabilities (see the section entitled "No Waiting in Line"); O.C.G.A. § 21-2-409.1.
[101] https://sos.ga.gov/page/voting-assistance-people-disabilities (see the section entitled "Adaptive Voting Machines").
[102] https://sos.ga.gov/page/voting-assistance-people-disabilities (see the section entitled "Voting with physical challenges"

HOW TO VOTE: VOTE BY MAIL

(in this state defined as: Vote by Absentee Ballot[103])

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

No. Georgia will *not* automatically send applications for mail-in ballots (also known as absentee ballots) or mail-in ballots (absentee ballots) to voters. Voters must apply for a mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) if they want to vote absentee or by mail. Any registered Georgia voter can request a mail-in ballot (absentee ballot). No special circumstances are necessary.[104]

The voter must complete an application for a mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) to request a mail-in ballot (absentee ballot). The voter must provide their name, date of birth, address where they are registered to vote, the address where the voter wishes the absentee ballot to be sent, and the number of their Georgia Driver's License or the number of their Georgia identification card issued by the Georgia Department of Driver Services (a "Georgia State issued ID"). **If the voter does not have a Georgia Driver's License or a Georgia State Issued ID, the voter must provide a copy of one of the other acceptable forms of identification (see Question 36) and include a copy or photo of such identification with the mail-in ballot application**. The voter must sign and date the application with a pen. No electronic signatures are permitted.[105]

A voter can request a mail-in ballot (absentee ballot):

- **Online** via the Secretary of State's online mail-in ballot application portal at this link.[106] The voter must print and sign the application, and then scan and upload a copy of the completed application. Detailed instructions for submitting a mail-in ballot application using the online portal are available at this link.[107] In the section entitled "Request an Absentee Ballot," select the dropdown information for "Submit Online."[108]

- **Through email** by printing the mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) application available for download at this link.[109] The voter must print and sign the application, and then scan it and email it to the voter's County Registrar's Office. Detailed instructions for submitting a mail-in ballot application via email are available at this link.[110] In the section entitled "Request an Absentee Ballot," select the dropdown information for "Submit by Email."

- **Via mail** by printing the mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) application available for download at this link.[111] The voter must print and sign the application, and then mail it to the voter's County Registrar's Office. Detailed instructions for submitting a mail-in ballot application via mail are

[103] https://georgia.gov/vote-absentee-ballot; https://carrollcountyga.gov/FAQ.aspx?QID=89; https://www.forsythco.com/Departments-Offices/Voter-Registrations-Elections/Absentee-Vote-By-Mail
[104] https://georgia.gov/vote-absentee-ballot; O.C.G.A. § 21-2-380.
[105] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-381.
[106] https://securemyabsenteeballot.sos.ga.gov/s/absentee-ballot-request
[107] https://georgia.gov/vote-absentee-ballot
[108] https://georgia.gov/vote-absentee-ballot
[109] https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/Absentee_Ballot_Application_20212.pdf
[110] https://georgia.gov/vote-absentee-ballot
[111] https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/Absentee_Ballot_Application_20212.pdf

available at this link.[112] In the section entitled "Request an Absentee Ballot," select the dropdown information for "Submit by Mail."

- **Via fax** by printing the mail-in ballot application available for download at this link.[113] The voter must print and sign the application, and then fax it to the voter's County Registrar. Detailed instructions for submitting a mail-in ballot application via fax are available at this link.[114] In the section entitled "Request an Absentee Ballot," select the dropdown information for "Submit by Fax."

- **In person** at the voter's County Registrar's Office, which will have mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) application forms available for completion. The voter can also print the mail-in ballot application, complete it in advance and drop it off at the County Registrar's office. Detailed instructions for submitting a mail-in ballot application in person are available at this link.[115] In the section entitled "Request an Absentee Ballot," select the dropdown information for "Submit in Person."

If an eligible voter is either temporarily residing out of the county or municipality, or if the voter has a physical disability, any of the following family members can submit an application for a mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) for a voter "upon satisfactory proof of relationship"[116]: the voter's mother, father, grandparent, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, spouse, son, daughter, niece, nephew, grandchild, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law or sister-in-law, so long as they are the age 18 or older. The family member submitting the mail-in ballot (absentee ballot)application must complete Section 11 of the mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) application, which requires the family member to (1) swear that the voter is either physically disabled or temporarily residing out of the county; (2) sign the application; and (3) state the family member's relationship to the voter.[117]

Disabled voters, voters who are 65 or older, Georgia voters residing overseas, and uniformed service members and their spouses and voting-age dependents can request mail-in ballots (absentee ballots) for all elections until the next election cycle with just one mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) application, by completing Section 12 of the application. A new application must be submitted each year.[118]

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

No. Any registered Georgia voter can request a mail-in ballot (also known as an absentee ballot). No special circumstances are necessary.[119]

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

[112] https://georgia.gov/vote-absentee-ballot
[113] https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/Absentee_Ballot_Application_20212.pdf
[114] https://georgia.gov/vote-absentee-ballot
[115] https://georgia.gov/vote-absentee-ballot
[116] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-381(a)(1)(B).
[117] A family member may also request a mail ballot application for municipal elections if the voter is temporarily out of the municipality. See Section 11 of the Georgia mail ballot application, available at https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/Absentee_Ballot_Application_20212.pdf
[118] *See* Section 12 of the Georgia mail ballot application available at https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/Absentee_Ballot_Application_20212.pdf
[119] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-380.

A completed application for a mail-in ballot (also known as an absentee ballot) must be submitted on-line via the Secretary of State's portal at this link or mailed, e-mailed, faxed, or delivered to the County Registrar's office in-person no earlier than 78 days prior to an election and no later than 11 days before the election.[120] Mailed applications must be *received* by the County Registrar's office no later than 11 days before the election, not postmarked by that date.[121]

Deadlines for requesting a mail-in ballot application for the November 3, 2026 general election are as follows[122]:

- The earliest day to request a mail-in ballot for the November 3, 2026 general election is August 17, 2026.[123]
- The last day to request a mail-in ballot for the November 3, 2026 general election and nonpartisan election is **October 23, 2026**.[124]

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

Only voters who are illiterate or physically disabled may receive assistance with filling out their application for a mail-in ballot (absentee ballot). Voters with autism may also receive assistance. If an illiterate or physically disabled voter receives assistance with completing their application for a mail-in ballot (absentee ballot), the individual who provided assistance must complete Section 10 of the application for a mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) by providing their name and signing and dating the application. By signing Section 10, the individual swears that the voter on whose behalf the mail-in ballot application is submitted is entitled to assistance with completing the mail-in ballot application. Assisting a voter who is not eligible for assistance violates Georgia law and is punishable by a fine up to $100,000 or imprisonment for up to 10 years, or both.[125]

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?

How to submit a mail-in ballot application. A completed application for a mail-in ballot (also known as an absentee ballot) may be:

- **Submitted on-line** via the Secretary of State's online mail-in ballot application portal at this link;[126]
- **Mailed** to the County Registrar's office;
- **E-mailed** to the County Registrar's office;
- **Faxed** to the County Registrar's office; or
- **Submitted in person** to the County Registrar's office.[127]

See Question 31 for more details on submitting a mail-in ballot application.

[120] https://georgia.gov/vote-absentee-ballot; O.C.G.A. § 21-2-381(a)(1)(A).
[121] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-381(a)(1)(A).
[122] https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/2026%20Elections%20Calendar.pdf; O.C.G.A. § 21-2-381(a)(1)(A).
[123] https://georgia.gov/events/2026-08-17/first-day-request-absentee-ballots-general-election.
[124] https://georgia.gov/events/2026-10-23/last-day-request-absentee-ballots-general-election.
[125] See Section 10 of the Georgia mail ballot application available at https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/Absentee_Ballot_Application_20212.pdf
[126] https://securemyabsenteeballot.sos.ga.gov/s/absentee-ballot-request
[127] https://georgia.gov/vote-absentee-ballot

Who can submit a mail ballot application for a voter: The voter must personally submit a mail-in ballot application, unless one of the following exceptions apply:

- The voter is temporarily residing out of the county. In that case, a voter's relative may submit the application on the voter's behalf (see Question 31).
- The voter is physically disabled. In that case, a voter's relative or an individual assisting the voter with completing the application may submit the application on the voter's behalf (see Question 31 and Question 34).
- The voter is illiterate. In that case, an individual assisting the voter with completing the application may submit the application on the voter's behalf (see Question 31 and Question 34).

It is a misdemeanor for any other individual to handle or return a voter's application for a mail-in ballot (absentee ballot).[128]

Deadline for submitting a mail-in ballot application: A completed application for a mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) may be submitted beginning 78 days prior to an election up until 11 days before the election. Mailed applications must be *received* by the County Registrar's office no later than 11 days before the election, not postmarked by that date.[129]

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

A voter must provide their Georgia Driver's License or the number of their Georgia identification card issued by the Georgia Department of Driver Services ("Georgia State issued ID") on their application for a mail-in ballot (absentee ballot). If the voter does not have a Georgia Driver's license or Georgia State issued ID number, they must include a copy of one of these alternative forms of ID with the application form:

- A Georgia driver's license, even if expired;
- Any valid state or federal government-issued photo ID, including a free Georgia voter ID card issued by the County Registrar's office or the Georgia Department of Driver Services (DDS);[130]
- A valid U.S. passport;
- A valid employee photo ID issued by a U.S. Government entity, a Georgia state government entity, or any Georgia county or local government entity, board or authority;
- A valid U.S. military photo ID;
- A valid tribal photo ID; or
- A valid Student ID from a Georgia Public College, University or Technical College.[131] **Please check the list of eligible colleges and universities. Student IDs from private colleges, universities and technical colleges are not valid as acceptable photo ID for voting.**

<< Or >>

- Any of the following documents that show the voter's name and address:
    - Current utility bill

[128] See page 2 of the Georgia mail-in ballot application available at https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/Absentee_Ballot_Application_20212.pdf https://securemyabsenteeballot.sos.ga.gov/s/absentee-ballot-request; O.C.G.A. § 21-2-381(C)(ii).
[129] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-381(a)(1)(A); https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/Absentee_Voting_In_Georgia_Rev_3-30-22.pdf.
[130] https://dds.georgia.gov/voter
[131] https://sos.ga.gov/page/georgia-colleges-and-universities

- Bank statement
- Paycheck
- Government check
- Other government document[132]

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

The mail-in ballot (also known as an absentee ballot) must be mailed to the voter's permanent mailing address as listed on their voter registration record or, if the voter is temporarily living outside the county, to the voter's temporary out-of-county address, except in the case of a voter who has a physical disability or is in custody in a jail or other detention facility.[133] A voter who is in custody in a jail or other detention facility and is not serving a felony sentence can apply for a mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) and request that the mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) be delivered to the facility.[134]

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

A voter who misses the deadline to apply for a mail-in ballot (also known as an absentee ballot) must vote in person during early voting or on Election Day.

However, if the voter is confined to a hospital, the voter may request a mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) on the date of the election or during the ten-day period immediately prior to the election. The County Registrar's office may deliver the mail ballot (absentee ballot) to the voter in the hospital.[135] **Note: This is not required and is totally within the discretion of the County Registrar's office to determine whether to hand deliver the ballot to a patient confined to a hospital.**

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

A voter can check the status of their application for a mail-in ballot, as well as the status of their mail-in ballot itself, on the "My Voter Page" on the Secretary of State's website at this link.[136]

Note that there can be delays in processing applications for mail-in ballots. If it has been some time since the voter's mail-in ballot application was received by the County Registrar's office but the voter has not yet received their mail-in ballot, they should contact their County Registrar's office.

40. **APPLICATION OR BALLOT REJECTED:** I learned my mail-in ballot application and/or ballot was rejected. What can I do to fix any errors or get another one?

If the voter's application for a mail-in ballot (also known as an absentee ballot) or their mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) was rejected, the voter should contact their County Registrar's office to get more

[132] See page 2 of the Georgia mail-in ballot application available at https://securemyabsenteeballot.sos.ga.gov/resource/1688626692000/AbsenteeBallotPDF.
[133] https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/Absentee_Voting_In_Georgia_Rev_3-30-22.pdf at 3.
[134] See Section 4 of the Georgia mail ballot application available at https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/Absentee_Ballot_Application_20212.pdf; O.C.G.A. § 21-2-385(a).
[135] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-384(a)(4).
[136] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/

information about why the application or ballot was rejected and how to fix it. An application for a mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) or mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) may be rejected if it is not completed and signed properly, or if the voter did not include the required ID number or ID documentation.

One reason that an application for a mail-in ballot or a mail ballot may be rejected is if the identification number the voter provided (e.g., the voter's Georgia Driver's License number, the number of the voter's identification issued by the Georgia Department of Drivers Services, or the voter's Social Security number) did not match the information in the relevant state database. In that case, the voter will have to provide the County Registrar's office with proof of identification (see Question 36 for the proof of identification that must be submitted when requesting a mail-in ballot, and Question 41 for the proof of identification that must be submitted when returning a mail-in ballot).

If a voter's registration is in "pending" status for citizenship verification, the voter will be required to produce an acceptable form of proof of U.S. citizenship to their County Registrar's office, deputy registrar or a poll worker at any polling place in order to vote a regular mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) when voting for the first time. A list of the documents which constitute acceptable proof of U.S. citizenship for voting is available at this link.[137]

If the voter needs to submit ID documents or other evidence of their eligibility, U.S. citizenship or residence, they must provide this documentation to their County Registrar's office within 3 days of Election Day, or their absentee ballot may be rejected.[138] Confirm what hours the voter's county registrar's office will be open to receive such additional evidence of their eligibility or residence and whether they can submit it to the County Registrar's office via email or fax.

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

The voter must first vote for the candidates of their choice by filling in the ovals next to the names of their selected candidates using a black or blue pen (not a pencil). The voter may not permit anyone to see them completing their ballot except for (1) the voter's own child under the age of 18, (2) any child under the age of 12, or (3) someone who is legally authorized to assist the voter with completing the mail-in ballot (also known as an absentee ballot) (see Question 42).[139]

The voter must then place the completed ballot in the white secrecy envelope labeled "Official Absentee Ballot." The voter should seal the envelope.

The voter must then place the sealed white secrecy envelope containing the completed ballot into the larger ballot return envelope. The ballot return envelope is the one with the voter oath printed on it. The voter must sign the oath and print their name, and provide their date of birth (not the date they are signing the oath).[140]

A voter must also provide their Georgia Driver's License number or the number of their Georgia identification card issued by the Georgia Department of Driver Services ("Georgia State issued ID") (if they have one) in the space provided on the ballot return envelope. If the voter does not have a Georgia Driver's License or Georgia State issued ID number, they must include the last four digits of their Social

[137] https://sos.ga.gov/page/proof-citizenship; O.C.G.A. § 21-2-417(a).
[138] O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-417(b); 21-2-419(c)(1).
[139] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-384(b).
[140] See https://www.gwinnettcounty.com/static/departments/elections/2022-Election/absentee-ballot-instructions-english.pdf.

Security number. If the voter does not have a Georgia Driver's License, Georgia State issued ID number, or Social Security number, then the voter must complete the affirmation to this effect on the ballot return envelope and include a copy of one of the acceptable forms of photo identification (see Question 36).

A copy of the voter's identification (if required) should be placed in the *outer* ballot return envelope, not in the white secrecy envelope.

The voter should then place the ballot return envelope into the mailing envelope if returning the ballot by mail.[141]

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

By law, Georgia requires that voters complete their mail-in ballot (also known as an absentee ballot) in secret without allowing other persons viewing how they voted it with the exception of the voter's own child under the age of 18, other persons under the age of 12 or persons authorized to provide assistance to a physically disabled voter or a voter who is illiterate, including voters of limited English proficiency.[142]

A physically disabled or illiterate voter can receive assistance completing their mail ballot from any person of their choice, except from:

- The voter's employer or an agent of the voter's employer;
- An officer or agent of the voter's union;
- Any candidate on the ballot;
- Any candidate's spouse, child, sibling, parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, grandchild, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, or sister-in-law.

If a physically disabled or illiterate voter receives help with completing their mail ballot, the person assisting the voter must complete the oath section for individuals assisting voters on the ballot return envelope.[143]

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?

Mail ballots must be *received by* the County Registrar's office by no later than 7:00 p.m. on Election Day (not postmarked by this date and time). Ballots which are not received by the County Registrar's office by the close of polls at 7:00 p.m. on Election Day will not be counted. Ballots mailed by voters and postmarked by Election Day, but which are received by the voter's County Registrar's office after 7:00 p.m. on Election Day, will not be counted.[144]

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[141] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-384(b); O.C.G.A. § 21-2-385(b). *See also* the instructions for completing the Georgia mail-in ballot here: https://www.gwinnettcounty.com/static/departments/elections/2022-Election/absentee-ballot-instructions-english.pdf; "A Guide for Registered Voters – An Overview of Georgia's Absentee Voting Process" at 4, Georgia Secretary of State, https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/Absentee_Voting_In_Georgia_Rev_3-30-22.pdf

[142] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-384(b); O.C.G.A. § 21-2-385(b)

[143] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-385(b); *see also* the instructions for completing the Georgia mail-in ballot here: https://www.gwinnettcounty.com/static/departments/elections/2022-Election/absentee-ballot-instructions-english.pdf

[144] *See* the instructions for completing the Georgia mail-in ballot here: https://www.dekalbcountyga.gov/sites/default/files/users/user3597/Absentee%20Instructions%20(2021).pdf ; "A Guide

Mail-in ballots (absentee ballots) may be dropped off in person to the County Registrar's office, mailed to the County Registrar's office or placed in a ballot drop box.[145]

Only the following individuals may submit a voter's mail-in ballot (absentee ballot):

- The voter;
- The voter's mother, father, grandparent, aunt, uncle, brother, sister, spouse, son, daughter, niece, nephew, grandchild, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, or sister-in-law;
- Someone living in the same household as the voter; or
- The caretaker of a physically disabled voter.[146]

The ballot of an incarcerated individual who is eligible to vote (see Question 12) may be mailed or delivered by any employee of the jail or facility having custody of such voter.[147]

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

Every county must provide at least one drop box for returning mail-in ballots. Drop boxes are only open during the dates and hours for early voting (see Question 27), which ends on the Friday before Election Day.[148] Drop boxes are located inside of buildings and are not accessible after hours.[149]

Voters should refer to their County Registrar's website to see whether there is a published list of drop box locations (see e.g., Fulton County link[150]). Alternatively, voters may call their County Registrar's office to request this information if it is not available online or the voter cannot access this information electronically. A list of County Registrar's offices is available at the Secretary of State's website at this link.[151]

Mail-in ballots may also be dropped off in person to the country registrar at any time before 7:00 pm on Election Day.[152]

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

See Question 43.

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?

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for Registered Voters – An Overview of Georgia's Absentee Voting Process" at 4, Georgia Secretary of State, https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/Absentee_Voting_In_Georgia_Rev_3-30-22.pdf

[145] https://georgia.gov/vote-absentee-ballot

[146] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-385(a); see also the instructions for completing the Georgia mail-in ballot here: https://www.dekalbcountyga.gov/sites/default/files/users/user3597/Absentee%20Instructions%20(2021).pdf

[147] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-385(a).

[148] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-382(c); https://georgia.gov/vote-absentee-ballot.

[149] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-382(c).

[150] https://www.fultoncountyga.gov/absenteedropbox

[151] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/county-election-offices

[152] https://georgia.gov/vote-absentee-ballot; see also "A Guide for Registered Voters – An Overview of Georgia's Absentee Voting Process" at 4, Georgia Secretary of State, https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/Absentee_Voting_In_Georgia_Rev_3-30-22.pdf

The voter should contact their County Registrar's office for instructions. The voter must sign an affidavit affirming that they lost, destroyed, or did not receive the mail ballot. A new ballot will then be issued to the voter.[153]

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

Voters should first check the "My Voter Page" on the Secretary of State's website at this link.[154]

If the County Registrar's office has not received the voter's application for a ballot after a reasonable amount of time, then the voter should submit a new application for a mail-in ballot application if the deadline for requesting a ballot has not passed (see Question 33).

If the County Registrar's office has sent out the mail ballot (absentee ballot) but the voter has not received it after a reasonable amount of time, the voter should contact their County Registrar's office to request that the ballot be canceled and that a replacement ballot be issued. Please note that requests for a replacement mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) made close in time to the election may not arrive in time for the voter to return the ballot so that it is received by the County Registrar's office by 7 p.m. on Election Day.

In the event the voter does not receive the mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) or receives it too late to ensure it will be received by the County Registrar's office by 7 p.m. on Election Day, the voter can still vote in person during early voting or on Election Day based on their relevant circumstances (see Question 48).

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

The answer depends on the circumstances.

If the voter has already completed and returned the mail-in ballot (also known as an absentee ballot) and it has been received by the County Registrar's office, it is deemed voted and no other ballot will be issued to the voter. The voter cannot later vote in person.

If the voter (a) applied for a mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) and the voter has not yet received the ballot; (b) received the mail-in ballot but has not yet returned the completed ballot to the County Registrar's office; or (c) returned the completed mail-in ballot to the County Registrar's office but the County Registrar's office has not received it, then the voter may request that the ballot be canceled and then vote in person in one of the following ways:

If the voter received the mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) and has it in their possession, the voter should bring the mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) when they go to vote in person, surrender it to the poll official and request that it be canceled. The voter will then be permitted to vote a regular ballot.

[153] "A Guide for Registered Voters – An Overview of Georgia's Absentee Voting Process" at 6, Georgia Secretary of State, https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/Absentee_Voting_In_Georgia_Rev_3-30-22.pdf

[154] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/

If the voter (a) has not received the mail-in ballot (absentee ballot), (b) has received the ballot but did not bring it to the polling location, or (c) returned the mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) but the County Registrar has not yet received the ballot, the voter can request that their mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) be canceled when they go to vote in person. After the poll official confirms the voter's identity and also confirms that the voter's mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) has not yet been received by the County Registrar, the voter will be permitted to vote a regular ballot. This cancellation process can take some time to complete at the poll because the poll official must confirm that the County Registrar has not yet received the voter's mail-in ballot (absentee ballot). Therefore, if the voter has received the mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) and is able to bring the ballot with them to the polling location, the voter may save some time by presenting the mail-in ballot (absentee ballot) to the poll official for cancellation at the poll.[155]

HOW TO VOTE: ABSENTEE

(In Georgia, the process for voting absentee is the same as the process for voting by mail.[156])

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

Any registered Georgia voter can request an absentee ballot. No special circumstances are necessary.[157]

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

See Question 33 above.

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

See Question 36 above.

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

Georgia does not have an "emergency absentee ballot" option. A completed absentee ballot application can be mailed, e-mailed, faxed, or hand-delivered to the County Registrar's office beginning 78 days prior to an election up until 11 days before the election.[158] However, voters are encouraged to submit their applications for an absentee ballot as early as possible because it is possible the voter will not receive the ballot prior to the election if the voter waits until the 11th day prior to the election to request the ballot. After the 11th day prior to the election the voter must vote in person.

[155] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-388; "A Guide for Registered Voters – An Overview of Georgia's Absentee Voting Process" at 6, Georgia Secretary of State, https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/Absentee_Voting_In_Georgia_Rev_3-30-22.pdf
[156] https://georgia.gov/vote-absentee-ballot
[157] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-380.
[158] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-381(a)(1)(A); https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/Absentee_Voting_In_Georgia_Rev_3-30-22.pdf

If a voter is confined to a hospital on Election Day or during the ten days prior to Election Day, they can request that their County Registrar's office bring and return an absentee ballot to the hospital. The voter will still be subject to the ID requirements applicable to absentee ballot applications and voting absentee ballots. Note that while Georgia law offers this as an *option* for hospitalized voters, the law does not *require* counties registered to deliver or collect absentee ballots for hospitalized voters.[159]

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

    See Question 35 above.

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

    See Question 39 above.

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

    See Question 40 above.

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?

    See Question 41 above.

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

    See Question 43 above.

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

    See Question 44 above.

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

    See Question 42 above for who cannot drop off a ballot and Question 43 for who can drop off a ballot for a voter.

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

    See Question 46 above.

[159] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-384(a)(4)

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

    See Question 47 above.

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

    See Question 48 above.

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

    Any voter registered in Georgia may vote absentee in person. This allows the voter to vote on a day and time that is convenient for them. Beginning on the 4th Monday prior to Election Day, the voter may visit their county or municipality early-voting site, fill out the application, and present one of the permitted forms of photo ID. As Election Day approaches, the voter's county may have multiple early voting sites and extended hours. Voting times and locations for the voter's precinct can be found at My Voter Page or searching on Advance Voting Location Information search (optimized for desktop only).[160]

POLLING PLACE ISSUES

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

    The voter should first confirm they are at the correct polling place location by checking the "My Voter Page" on the Secretary of State's website at this link.[161]

    If the voter is calling during early voting, make sure that the voter is at a location that is open for early voting. Also confirm that the voter is going to the polling place during a date and time when it is open.

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?

    Please advise the voter to stay in line. Any voter who is in line by 7:00 p.m. on Election Day must be allowed to cast a ballot. During early voting, poll closing times will vary by county and location; any voter who is in line prior to the closing of the polls must be allowed to cast a ballot.[162]

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

    Voters should immediately notify the election officers if the voting equipment breaks down while the polls are open and before they leave the room where voting is taking place, or their ballot may be voided. A voter should ask if a paper ballot is available if the voting equipment is not working.[163] Voters who are given an emergency paper ballot due to voting machine malfunctions or other similar problems

[160] https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/Absentee_Voting_In_Georgia_Rev_3-30-22.pdf
[161] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/
[162] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-413(g).
[163] O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-281; 21-2-334.

may be told that these are "provisional" ballots. However, a voter who is given a "provisional" emergency ballot due to voting machine malfunctions or similar problems do not require the voter to take any post-election day action to make those ballots count unless the voter is required to vote a provisional ballot for other reasons, i.e., the voter failed to produce acceptable photo ID or proof of citizenship; the voter was not on the registration list; or for other reasons unrelated to a voting machine malfunction or other problem with the operation of the poll.

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

Georgia law prohibits individuals from soliciting votes in any manner or by any means of method; distributing or displaying any campaign materials; soliciting signatures for any petition; giving, offering to give or participating in the giving of money or gifts to any voter; providing food and water to any voter; or setting up tables or booths on any day in which ballots are being cast:

- within any polling place;
- within 150 feet of the outer edge of the building in which the polling place is established; or
- within 25 feet of any voter standing in line to vote at any polling place.[164]
- Criminal penalties may apply for violations of the ban on providing food or water to any elector within these areas.[165]

The term "campaign material" means any written or printed matter referring to: (a) a candidate whose name appears on the ballot in a primary or general election; (b) a referendum which appears on the ballot in a primary or election; or (c) a political party or body which has a nominee on the ballot in a primary or general election.[166]

Individuals are also prohibited from electioneering or soliciting votes for any political party or candidate or issue within the polling place.[167] Electioneering is generally understood to include displaying signs, passing out campaign literature and the wearing of paraphernalia associated with a political campaign, political party, candidates, and/or referenda on the ballot.

A candidate who is on the ballot may enter a polling place only for the purpose of casting their ballot; the candidate must leave the polling place immediately after voting.[168]

Georgia law also prohibits individuals from conducting any exit poll or public opinion poll within 25 feet of the exit of a polling place.[169]

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

It is against the law to campaign or electioneer within 150 feet of a polling place or within 25 feet of any voter standing in line to vote, or to distribute food, beverages, or other items of value to voters within this area (see Question 68).[170] That means there cannot be campaign signs on the vehicle in that area

[164] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-414(a). Election officials discharging their duties are, of course, permitted to set up tables or booths. *Id.*
[165] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-414(f) ("Any person who violates this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.").
[166] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-2(3.1).
[167] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-413(d).
[168] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-414(d).
[169] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-414(c)(1).
[170] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-414(a). Election officials discharging their duties are, of course, permitted to set up tables or booths. *Id.*

and people cannot wear shirts, hats, jackets, or other clothing that promotes a candidate on the ballot for the current election or a political party with a candidate up for election.[171]

For questions related to the distribution of food and beverages to voters standing in line, refer to Question 68.[172]

Using cellphones and other electronic or photographic devices while in a polling place when voting is taking place is also prohibited.[173]

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

Poll workers are prohibited from:

- Using photographic or other electronic monitoring or recording devices, cameras, or cell phones; however, a poll manager may allow the use of photographic or electronic devices in the polling place if the election superintendent finds it appropriate or use photographic or electronic devices for official purposes (restrictions apply).[174]
- Campaigning and electioneering (see Question 68).[175]
- Entering into the voting compartment or booth while a voter is voting; interfering with a voter while the voter is voting; attempting to induce the voter to reveal the voter's vote; or revealing the voter's vote without the voter's consent (except when required to do so in a legal proceeding).[176]
- Refusing to permit eligible registered voters to vote with the knowledge that such individuals are entitled to vote; permitting unregistered or unqualified persons to vote with the knowledge that such individuals are not entitled to vote; and rendering unlawful assistance in voting.[177]

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?

No person other than peace officers regularly employed by the federal, state, county, or municipal government or certified security guards are permitted to carry firearms within 150 feet of any polling place.[178] There are also extensive restrictions on campaigning and electioneering at polling places (see Question 68).

Voter intimidation – defined as using or threatening to use force or violence or acting in any other manner to intimidate a person into (a) voting or refraining from voting; (b) voting or refraining from voting for or against a particular candidate or ballot measure; or (c) registering to vote or not registering to vote–is a felony, punishable by up to 10 years of imprisonment and/or a fine up to $100,000.[179] It is

[171] O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-413(d), 21-2-414(a); https://sos.ga.gov/page/elections-faq (see the FAQ entitled, "Are there rules on what I can wear or say at the polls?").
[172] https://www.scribd.com/document/665843761/Food-and-Drink-Georgia-SB-202-ruling
[173] O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-413(e). Exceptions apply for the use of photographic or electronic devices permitted by elections officials. *Id.*
[174] O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-413(e).
[175] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-414.
[176] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-568.
[177] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-590.
[178] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-413(i).
[179] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-567.

also a felony to willfully block or attempt to block the door of any polling place; or to use or threaten violence in a manner that would prevent a reasonable voter from voting or actually preventing a voter from voting.[180]

If the voter is uncomfortable about potential intimidation, harassment or violence at a polling place, the voter should speak to one of the poll workers about their concern.

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

Georgia law permits registered voters in a county to challenge the eligibility of other voters in the same county to remain on the voter registration list or to vote in an upcoming election.[181] Challenges must be made in writing and presented to the county registrar.[182] There is no limit to the number of voters that another voter may challenge. Voters may not be challenged for the first time upon arriving to vote at the polls (but a voter may learn of a challenge that was previously filed when they attempt to vote).[183]

Where a voter's right to remain on the electors list is being challenged (called a "Section 229" challenge), the challenger bears the burden of proof and the board of registrars must send written notice of a hearing on the challenge to both the voter and the challenger within ten days of receipt of the challenge.[184] Both the voter and challenger have the right to file an appeal from the final determination of such challenges in the superior court.[185]

Where a voter's right to vote in an upcoming election is being challenged (called a "Section 230" challenge), the challenger must establish probable cause for the challenge.[186] In the case of such challenges, the board of registrars is required to make an "immediate" determination of whether the challenger has established probable cause for the challenge.[187] If the board of registrars determines probable cause has been established for the challenge, the voter is put into "challenged" status and the voter must produce evidence demonstrating that they are eligible to vote if they vote absentee by mail or appear to vote in person during advanced voting or on election day.[188] *If the challenge is based on the grounds that the voter is not qualified to remain on the voter rolls, and the challenged voter does not seek to vote, the board of registrars treats the challenge as if it is challenging the right of the voter to remain on the elector's list and send notice of a challenge hearing to the voter and challenger as described in the preceding paragraph as a "Section 229" challenge*.[189]

If a voter is in "challenged" status and is still eligible to vote in the county where they are registered, the voter should contact their county registrar's office to determine what the alleged basis is for the challenge and how the voter can cure the challenge so that they can cast a mail in ballot (also known as an absentee ballot) or vote in person. If a challenged voter appears in person to vote, but does not bring proof of their eligibility to vote to the polls, they will be required to vote a provisional ballot and produce proof of their eligibility to the county registrar by no later than 3 days after Election Day.

[180] O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-566(3, 4).
[181] O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-229 and 21-2-230.
[182] Id.
[183] O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-229(a), 21-2-230(a).
[184] O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-229.
[185] Id.
[186] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-230.
[187] Id.
[188] Id.
[189] Id.

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

In certain instances, there may be armed law enforcement present at the polls due to a request by poll officials for law enforcement to maintain order, to direct traffic, to monitor a drop box at that location, or when the law enforcement officer is there to cast their own ballot. There also may be Secretary of State investigators or security guards employed by the county who are/may be armed. Law enforcement, Secretary of State investigators or security guards present at or around the polls should not intimidate or harass voters.

If law enforcement or other individuals engage in harassing or intimidating conduct at the polls, voters may report this conduct to the poll manager or to the County Registrar's office to request assistance or they may contact the 1-866-Our-Vote hotline to report the incident.

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

See Question 21.

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

See Question 22.

ACCESSIBILITY/ASSISTANCE

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

Voting information and instructions should be posted at each active voting place. In addition, a voter may request instruction on the proper use of the voting system from a poll official. The poll official shall provide such technical instruction to the voter but shall not seek to influence or intimidate the voter's vote. The poll worker must leave the poll booth before the voter votes.[190]

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?

Georgia's voting system offers a range of accessibility devices and options to accommodate various disabilities, including autism. A list of adaptive devices is available on the Secretary of State's website at this link.[191]

Each polling place must be accessible to elderly voters and to voters with disabilities.[192] In elections with federal candidates on the ballot, federal law requires that the county registrar ensure that polling places are accessible.

[190] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-410.
[191] https://sos.ga.gov/page/voting-assistance-people-disabilities.
[192] Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 183-1-6-.04.

Exceptions are allowed if all potential polling places have been surveyed, no accessible place is available, and the county cannot make one temporarily accessible. In these cases, voters with disabilities must either be reassigned to an accessible polling place or provided another means for voting on election day. Voters with disabilities should contact their county registrar's office in advance to determine whether their polling place is accessible and, if not, what alternative options exist for voters with disabilities.

In addition, under Georgia law, voters who are 75 years or older or who are physically disabled and need assistance to vote, shall, upon request to a designated poll official, absentee ballot clerk, registrar or deputy registrar, be authorized to vote immediately at the next available voting compartment or booth without having to wait in line or be authorized to go to the head of any line necessary to cast a mail-in ballot (also known as an absentee ballot). Notice of the provisions of this Code section are required to be prominently displayed in the County Registrar's office.[193]

78. **READING/LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE:** I am blind, have a physical disability, or cannot read English and require assistance in order to vote. Can I get assistance at the polls?

Yes. A physically disabled voter or a voter who cannot read English can receive assistance with voting from any person except for:

- The voter's employer or an agent of the voter's employer;
- An officer or agent of the voter's union;
- Any candidate on the ballot; or
- Any candidate's spouse, child, sibling, parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, grandchild, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, or sister-in-law.

If a voter receives such assistance, the person assisting the voter must identify themselves to the poll worker who shall then record the fact that the voter received assistance.[194]

Note: Gwinnett County is the only county in Georgia covered by Section 203. As a result, Gwinnett County is the only county required to provide ballots, signage, and other related materials in Spanish. Voters qualifying for language access assistance under 4(e) may request translated election materials, ballots, instructions, interpreter or other Spanish language assistance to the extent the jurisdiction offers it so that they are not denied the right to vote due to their limited English proficiency.[195]

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?

A voter who cannot read English may receive assistance with voting. See Question 78 above.

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

There is no curbside voting in Georgia. See Questions 77 and 78 above, regarding accommodations for senior voters and voters with disabilities.

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

[193] O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-385.1, 21-2-409.1.
[194] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-409.
[195] Section 4(e) of the Voting Rights Act.

The voter may bring notes into the voting booth with them provided those notes are on paper and not electronic. Georgia law prohibits voters from using cellular telephones, cameras, and other recording devices for any purpose in a polling place while voting is taking place.[196]

STATE SPECIFIC SUPPLEMENT

82. **UNHOUSED RESIDENTS:** I am unhoused (i.e., "homeless") person residing in a shelter, or have a nontraditional residence (i.e., I live "on the street," in a park, car, or RV, or another nontraditional residence). Can I register to vote?

Unhoused, i.e., "homeless," and housing insecure Georgians retain their right to vote if otherwise eligible to vote and have registered to vote in the county where they are residing.[197] This is true even if they lack a fixed address or reside at non-traditional locations, such as on the street, in public parks, vehicles or other places without a house number or street address, so long as they are residents of the State of Georgia and a Georgia county unless they have the present intention of moving out of the state or out of the county where they are presently residing. Unhoused Georgia voters may register to vote using an address where they routinely stay (such as a shelter, a church or the home of a friend or relative).[198]

If a Georgia voter does not have an address where they routinely stay, they may contact their County Registrar's office to determine what "home address" to list on the Georgia voter registration application.[199] They may also state their lack of an address on the voter registration application and include a drawing of their location with their voter registration form to assist the county registrar in locating their appropriate voting precinct.

Please note that unhoused Georgians cannot use a Post Office box as their residence address for voter registration purposes. As noted above, if the voter is unhoused and they do not have a street address or house number, they should draw a diagram of where they are residing and submit it with their voter registration form.

If an Unhoused voter is not presently receiving their election related mail at the residential address or their mailing address they submitted on their voter registration form, they should contact to their County Registrar's Office to see if their election related mail is being collected there so they can collect it.

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[196] O.C.G.A. § 21-2-413(e).

[197] *See* O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-216 and 21-2-217 (no prohibition on the use of nontraditional residences when registering to vote); *Cook v. Bd. of Registrars of Randolph Cnty.,* 320 Ga. App. 447, 449-53 (2013); *Collier v. Menzel,* 176 Cal. App. 3d. 24, 35 (Cal. Ct. App. 1985); *Pitts v. Black*, 608 F. Supp. 696, 699 (S.D.N.Y. 1984). Both the Georgia and federal voter registration application forms permit applicants to diagram their voter registration residence address if it does not have a house number or street address.

[198] See https://www.fultoncountyga.gov/inside-fulton-county/fulton-county-departments/registration-and-elections/homeless-voter-information.

[199] *See* http://fultoncountyga.gov/inside-fulton-county/fulton-county-departments/registration-and-elections/homeless-voter-information; See O.C.G.A. § 21-2-217(a)(1.1).

83. **FIREARMS AT POLLS:** A person is carrying a firearm at the polls. Is this lawful? What should I do?

    Under Georgia law, no person except peace officers regularly employed by the federal, state, county, or municipal government or certified security guards shall be permitted to carry firearms within 150 feet of any polling place while elections are being conducted. This includes polling places located in non-government premises as well as government buildings.[200]

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

    The voter should contact the County Registrar's office where the voter resides and/or is registered to vote or the Georgia Secretary of State's office. A voter can find contact information for their County Registrar's office on the Secretary of State's website at this link.[201]

[200] See O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-413(i), 16-11-127(b)(7).
[201] https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/county-election-offices