

Jon Husted
Ohio Secretary of State



VOTER ACCESS GUIDE

for voters with disabilities

ADA Coordinator's Office

Toll Free: (877) SOS-Ohio (767-6446)

TTY Toll Free: 877-TTY-OHIO (889-6446)

TTY: 614-728-3295

www.OhioSecretaryofState.gov

My  vote

My Right • My Responsibility



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Voting Information Guide for Voters with Disabilities

People with disabilities have equal rights under both state and federal law. These laws allow people with disabilities to have complete access to the voting process.

If you have questions or need information, you can:

Call the Ohio Secretary of State's ADA Coordinator at (614) 387-6039.

Go to the Ohio Secretary of State's website at: www.OhioSecretaryofState.gov

Call (614) 466-2585 or toll free (877) SOS-OHIO (767-6446) for general information.

General Information

You can register to vote in Ohio if you meet all of these conditions:

- You are a citizen of the United States.
- You will be at least 18 years old on or before the day of the next general election.
- You will be a resident of Ohio for at least 30 days immediately before the election in which you want to vote.
- You are not in jail or in prison for a felony conviction under the laws of Ohio, another state, or the United States.
- You have not been declared incompetent for voting purposes by a probate court.
- You have not lost your right to vote due to violations of elections laws.

Registering to Vote

In order to vote in Ohio, you must be registered to vote. To register, you must fill out a registration form. You can get a registration form in several ways:

Through the Internet

Go to the Secretary of State's website at <http://www.OhioSecretaryofState.gov/SOS/publications.aspx?vrf> to print a voter registration form to complete.

By phone

Call the board of elections in your county or the Secretary of State's office at (614) 466-2585 or toll free at (877) SOS-OHIO (767-6446). You can request a registration form be mailed to you.

In-person

You can get a voter registration application and register to vote in-person at any of the following locations:

- The office of the Secretary of State;
- The office of any of the 88 county boards of elections;
- The office of any registrar or deputy registrar of the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles;
- Public libraries;
- Public high schools or vocational schools;
- County treasurers' offices; or
- Any designated agency, including the following offices and organizations:
 - The Department of Job and Family Services;
 - The Department of Health – (including the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program);
 - The Department of Mental Health;
 - The Department of Developmental Disabilities;

- The Rehabilitation Services Commission; or
- The office of any state-assisted college or university that helps students with disabilities.

After you have obtained your voter registration form, fill in all of the required information.

Be sure to check the form carefully. Once your form is filled out, your form needs to be returned either by mail or in-person. You may:

- Send your voter registration application by U.S. Mail to the county board of elections, to the Secretary of State's office, or to any of the other offices listed above;
- Personally deliver your voter registration application to the county board of elections, to the Secretary of State's office, or to any of the other offices listed above; or
- Have someone else personally deliver your voter registration application to the county board of elections, to the Secretary of State's office, or to any of the offices listed above for you within 10 days of you completing the form.

You can register to vote any time during the year. In order to be eligible to vote in an election, your registration form must be received at least 30 days before an election or postmarked no later than 30 days before the election.

If you have recently registered for the first time or have recently updated your name or address with your county board of elections, you will receive a card in the mail designating your polling location where you can vote on Election Day.

Frequently Asked Questions

When should I register to vote?

You can register to vote any time during the year. In order to be eligible to vote in an election, your registration form must be received at least 30 days before an election or postmarked no later than 30 days before the election. Someone else can deliver your registration form for you. That person must

return your completed form to your county board of elections or to the Secretary of State's office within 10 days of you completing the form.

If your registration form is not received or postmarked by the 30 day deadline, then you will not be able to vote in the election that immediately follows the deadline. However, you would be registered for the following election.

What if I moved or changed my name since the last time I voted?

If you are a registered Ohio voter, you must report a change of name or address. Do this by completing a new registration form or a change-of-address form. You can get the form you need at:

- The Secretary of State's website: www.OhioSecretaryofState.gov;
- The office of the Secretary of State;
- The office of any of the 88 county board of elections;
- The office of any registrar or deputy registrar of the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles;

- **Public libraries;**
- **Public high schools or vocational schools;**
- **County treasurers' offices; or**
- **Any designated agency, including the following offices and organizations:**
 - **The Department of Job and Family Services;**
 - **The Department of Health – (including Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program);**
 - **The Department of Mental Health;**
 - **The Department of Developmental Disabilities;**
 - **The Rehabilitation Services Commission; or**
 - **Any state-assisted college or university that helps students with disabilities.**

You can update your voter registration during the 28 days before — and on the day of — the election. This may mean you will have to vote with a provisional ballot.

What if I am not able to sign my voter registration form or other voting forms?

You must sign or attach a signature to the voter registration form. "Sign" or "signature" is your written, cursive-style legal mark that is written in your own handwriting.

If you do not use a cursive "sign" or "signature" in your regular and legal business, "sign" or "signature" means your other legal mark, such as your printed (non-cursive) name that you use in your regular and legal business that is written in your own handwriting.

What if I am unable to sign my name?

If you can, make an "X" on the signature line. You must then have the person who witnessed you make that mark put his or her signature under the signature line.

What if I am unable to make an "X"?

You must show in some way that you want to register to vote. If you cannot make an "X" on

the signature line, the person who is helping you can sign the form instead. He or she must sign the form and indicate that you want to register to vote.

What if I am unable to sign my name, make an “X,” or make another legal mark?

If, by reason of disability, you are unable to physically sign your name, make an “X” or make another legal mark, you can have an “attorney-in-fact” sign your name for you. Your attorney-in-fact must be a legally competent resident of the state of Ohio who is 18 years of age or older. Your attorney-in-fact would sign your name on election documents when you ask him or her to do so and while you are watching. In order to have a person act as your attorney-in-fact, there are certain forms (Secretary of State forms 10-F and 10-G) that must be filled out in accordance with R.C. 3501.382. You can get these forms by contacting your local board of elections or from the Secretary of State’s website at: www.OhioSecretaryofState.gov/SOS/elections/electionofficials/forms.aspx

Where do I vote on Election Day?

Where you vote on Election day is determined by the address where you live and are registered to vote. If you do not know where your precinct or polling location is located, you can find out by contacting your local board of elections or by visiting the Secretary of State's website at: www.OhioSecretaryofState.gov/SOS/pollinglocation.aspx.

What should I bring with me when I vote?

You must bring one form of identification with you when you vote. Accepted forms of identification include:

- Current and valid Ohio driver's license.
- Current and valid photo identification issued by the State of Ohio or the U.S. government.
- Military identification.
- Copy of a current utility bill.
- Copy of a current bank statement.
- Copy of a current government check.

- Copy of a current paycheck; or
- Other government document that shows the voter's name and current address (excluding a voter registration acknowledgement notice mailed by a board of elections).

All forms of identification must be current, which means that it has not expired or was issued within one year of the date of the election. If you use a utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document, it must have your current name and address.

Can I vote if I do not bring one of these forms of identification with me?

Yes. If you do not bring one of these documents with you, you will still be able to vote. You can provide the last four digits of your Social Security number and you will then be able to vote with a provisional ballot.

If you do not have any form of identification, including your Social Security number, you can still vote. You will have to sign a form, swearing

to your identity under penalty of election falsification and you will then be able to vote with a provisional ballot.

Provisional Ballot

You will receive a provisional ballot if a precinct election official tells you that you cannot vote a regular ballot. The content of a provisional ballot and a regular ballot is the same. When a provisional ballot is cast, election officials will later decide whether the ballot can count based on the voter's eligibility to vote.

You will receive a provisional ballot when:

- Your name does not appear on the official poll list for that precinct;
- An election official asserts that you are not eligible to vote;
- An election official is unable to determine your eligibility;
- You are unable, or decline to provide the required proof of identity;

- You had already asked for an absentee ballot for the same election;
- Your name is marked in the official poll list or signature book because certain registration mailings were returned by the post office as undeliverable;
- A hearing to challenge your voting eligibility has been postponed until after the election;
- Your signature does not match the signature on your registration form; or
- Your eligibility to vote has been challenged by the precinct officials.

If you are told you cannot vote for some reason — and you think you should be able to vote — you can ask for a provisional ballot and vote with it.

When you vote with a provisional ballot, you may need to provide additional information to the board of elections. Generally, if you did show proof of your identity at the time you cast your ballot, you will not need to give more information to the board of elections. If you did

not show proof of your identity, you will need to give more information to the board of elections. You will need to go to the board of elections in person and show them your identification within 10 days after the election.

Assistance at the Voting Location

If you cannot mark your ballot because you have a physical or mental disability, or you are unable to read or write, you may receive assistance. If you need assistance, you can choose anyone to help you, except the following people:

- A candidate whose candidacy is being voted on at your precinct;
- Your employer or your employer's agent;
or
- If you are a member of a union, an officer or agent of your union.

You may also choose to be assisted by two poll workers (each from a different political party). No one who assists you can tell you how to vote or disclose any information about how you voted.

Alternative Ways to Vote

Curbside Voting

At any polling location that is exempt from the accessibility requirements, if you have a disability and are unable to enter the polling place, you can vote curbside. Two precinct election officials from the major political parties will bring a ballot to you. You may sit in your car and vote, or you may vote at the door of the building.

Absentee Voting

In-Person Absentee Voting

You can vote in person before Election Day. For most elections, in-person absentee voting starts 35 days before Election Day and ends at 6 p.m. on the Friday before Election Day.

Visit your county board of elections or the designated early voting site no later than 6 p.m. the Friday before Election Day. You can request, receive, and cast your ballot all at the same time.

In order to find out where to vote in person before Election Day, contact your county board of elections.

Absentee Voting by Mail

Absentee voting by mail gives all people, including people with disabilities, the opportunity to vote without having to travel to their polling location.

Requesting your absentee ballot by mail:

- Official request forms are available on the Secretary of State's Website and from your county board of elections. Your request must contain certain information.
- If you mail your absentee ballot application, your board of elections must receive it by noon on the Saturday before Election Day.
- You must return your voted absentee ballot to the board of elections in order for it to be counted.
 - **Returning your ballot by mail:** Your county board of elections must receive

your voted ballot by 7:30 p.m. on Election Day or your ballot must be postmarked the day before Election Day and received by the board of elections by the 10th day after Election Day.

- **Returning your ballot in person:** Your ballot must be received by your county's board of elections by 7:30 p.m. on Election Day.

Absentee Voting – Frequently Asked Questions

When do I apply for an absentee ballot?

You can apply for an absentee ballot anytime after January 1st, or 90 days before the date of an election, whichever is earlier.

Absentee ballots are available:

- 35 days before a primary election.
- 35 days before a general election.

- As early as practicable before special elections occurring on a day other than the day on which a primary or general election is held.

Regular absentee voting ends at 6 p.m. on the Friday before Election Day.

You can contact your county board of elections to find out about any special elections.

How do I get an absentee ballot?

You must ask for an absentee ballot in writing. You must submit your request to the board of elections of the county where your voting residence is located. To avoid problems, you are encouraged, but not required, to use an application form prescribed by the Ohio Secretary of State. This form is available for download on the Secretary of State's website at: www.OhioSecretaryofState.gov/SOS/publications.aspx#abr

What information do I need to provide on my application?

You will need to give your county board of elections all the information on the following page:

- 1. Your name;**
- 2. Your legal signature;**
- 3. The address where you are registered to vote;**
- 4. Your birth date;**
- 5. One of the following to show proof of your identification:**
 - a. Your driver's license number; or**
 - b. The last four digits of your Social Security number; or**
 - c. A copy of your current and valid photo identification, military identification, or a current utility bill, current bank statement, current government check, current paycheck, or other government document that shows your name and current address (excluding a voter registration acknowledgement notice mailed by a board of elections);**
- 6. A statement that you are a qualified elector;**

7. If the request is for a partisan primary election ballot, your political party affiliation; and
8. If you want the ballot to be mailed to you, the address to which you want it mailed.

How do I return my request for an absentee ballot?

After you fill out your request for an absentee ballot, you can return it in several ways:

By mail

You may mail your completed absentee ballot application to the board of elections of the county where your voting residence is located. Your application must have your original signature on it. The board must receive your application by noon on the third day before Election Day.

You should try to send your request as far in advance as possible to make sure that there is enough time for the board to receive your application, send you a ballot, and for you to return your ballot.

By fax

Only uniformed services voters and overseas voters, and their spouses and dependents, can apply for an absentee ballot by electronic means.

In person

You can return your absentee ballot application in person. You can contact your county board of elections to find out the location of where you can return your completed form in person. The deadline to request your absentee ballot application in person is no later than 6 p.m. on the Friday before Election Day.

What if I have a disability that prevents me from traveling to my polling location on Election Day?

If you are unable to travel to your polling location on Election Day due to your personal illness, physical disability, you still are able to vote. You can request in writing that the board deliver an absentee ballot to you. Your written request must include all of the following information:

- All of the information required on an absentee ballot application (see What information do I need to provide on my application? on page 21)
- A statement describing the nature of your illness, physical disability, and why you are unable to travel to your polling location on Election Day.

You can request that the ballot be mailed directly to you. You also can request that two board of elections employees from the two major political parties deliver the ballot to you as long as you are located in the county. If you are unable to mark the ballot by reason of your disability, you may request help from the two employees sent assist you.

These employees can also return your ballot to the board of elections for you.

You can use Secretary of State form 11-F to complete your request.

www.OhioSecretaryofState.gov/SOS/elections/electionofficials/forms.aspx

Your county board of elections must receive this request before noon on the third day before Election Day.

What if I am unexpectedly in the hospital on Election Day? What If my minor child is unexpectedly in the hospital on Election Day?

If you are unable to travel to your polling location on Election Day because you or your minor child is hospitalized due to an accident or unforeseeable medical emergency occurring before the election, you can still vote.

You can submit a completed and signed request to the director of the board or elections of the county in which your voting residence is located by 3 p.m. on Election Day. Your application must specify where, why and when you or your minor child came to be hospitalized.

If you or your minor child is hospitalized in the same county where you are registered to vote, two representatives of the board of elections can deliver the ballot to you, wait for you to mark the ballot and return your voted ballot to the board office.

If you or your minor child is hospitalized outside of the county, the board will arrange for the delivery of an absent voter's ballot through the mail.

Regardless of whether you are in the county or outside of the county, you may instead request that your county board of elections give your unmarked ballot to a designated relative, who will deliver the ballot to you and return your voted ballot to the board office. A “designated relative” includes the elector’s:

- Spouse
- Father or mother
- Father-in-law or mother-in-law
- Grandfather or grandmother
- Brother or sister of the whole or half blood
- Son or daughter
- Adoptive parent
- Adopted child
- Stepparent
- Stepchild
- Uncle or aunt
- Nephew or niece

You can use Secretary of State form 11-B to complete your request, which is available at www.sos.state.oh.us/SOS/elections/electionofficials/forms.aspx.

Depending on the timing of your unforeseeable medical emergency, you may be able to return your completed ballot by mail. If returning it by mail, it must be postmarked no later than the day before the election and received by the board of elections before the eleventh day after the election. If your ballot is returned in-person by a designated relative, your completed absentee ballot must be returned to the board of elections by 7:30 p.m. on Election Day.

Accessibility Laws Protecting People with Disabilities

In Ohio, polling locations are required by state and federal law to be accessible for people with disabilities.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The ADA helps make sure that all people with disabilities are treated fairly. Specifically, the ADA helps to make sure that people with disabilities can:

- Apply for the same jobs.

- Receive the same state and local government services.
- Use the same public places, facilities, and transportation as other people.
- Made TDD/telephone relay services possible.
- Access polling locations in the same way other voters do.
- The ADA helps to protect people with disabilities against receiving unequal treatment within state and local government services, programs and activities. (ADA, Title II)

For more information on the ADA please visit the Department of Justice's website at:
www.ada.gov.

Help America Vote Act (HAVA)

HAVA helps people with disabilities vote by making sure that:

- Polling locations are easy to get to and to use.
- People who are blind or have problems seeing get the help they need.
- Voting is private and personal.

- Each polling location has at least one voting machine that is accessible for people with disabilities.

HAVA says that voting systems used in elections for federal office must “be accessible for individuals with disabilities, including nonvisual accessibility for the blind and visually impaired, in a manner that provides the same opportunity for access and participation (including privacy and independence) as for other voters.”

(HAVA section 301 (a)(3)(A))

HAVA also provides that states can comply with this rule “through the use of at least one direct recording electronic voting system or other voting system equipped for individuals with disabilities at each polling place.”

(HAVA section 301(a)(3)(B))

For more information on HAVA visit
www.eac.gov/about_the_eac/help_america_vote_act.aspx

Ohio Law

The Ohio Revised Code requires that polling locations are free of barriers, with nothing blocking the entrances or exits. Also, polling locations must have ramps, wide doors and accessible parking. R.C. 3501.29.

In addition, some HAVA rules have been incorporated into Ohio Law.

To review the Ohio Revised Code visit codes.ohio.gov.

Do You Need More Information?

If you need more information, contact one of the offices or websites listed below.

Ohio Secretary of State

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator's Office

The Ohio Secretary of State's office promotes accessibility to polling locations and sensitivity to voters with a disability.

180 E. Broad St., 15th Floor

Columbus, OH 43215

Toll Free: (877) SOS-OHIO (767-6446)

Toll: (614) 387-6039

TTY Toll Free: 877-TTY-OHIO (889-6446)

TTY: 614-728-3295

E-mail: election@OhioSecretaryofState.gov

Website: www.OhioSecretaryofState.gov

Ohio Secretary of State Voter Services

To learn where, when and how to vote, as well get information on what type of voting system is used in your county.

Website: www.OhioSecretaryofState.gov/SOS/elections/voterInformation.aspx

Ohio Legal Rights Service

The Ohio Legal Rights Service works with people with disabilities to protect and advocate for their human, civil and legal rights.

50 W. Broad St., Suite 1400

Columbus, OH 43215

Toll Free: (800) 282-9181

Toll: (614) 466-7264

TTY: (614) 728-2553 / (800) 858-3542

Website: olrs.ohio.gov

County Boards of Elections

Each of Ohio's 88 counties has a board of elections office that is responsible for administering local elections. For a complete and up-to-date listing visit the website below. The board can answer questions on registering to vote, where to vote, and the type of voting machines that are used.

Website: www.OhioSecretaryofState.gov/boards.htm

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Jon Husted

Ohio Secretary of State



Jon Husted

180 E. Broad St., 16th Fl.

Columbus, Ohio 43215

Toll Free: (877) 767-6446

Phone: (614) 466-2585

TTY Toll Free: 877-TTY-OHIO (889-6446)

TTY: 614-728-3295

elections@OhioSecretaryofState.gov

www.OhioSecretaryofState.gov

Ohio Legal Rights Service

50 W. Broad St., Ste. 1400

Columbus, Ohio 43215

Toll Free: (800) 282-9181

Local: (614) 466-7264

TTY Toll Free: (800) 858-3542

TTY: (614) 728-2553

Website: *olrs.ohio.gov*