



Your Vote

★
*Your Voice
 in Your Future*

A Guide to Voter Registration in Pennsylvania

<i>Absentee Voting Categories</i>	<i>Must Elector Be Registered?</i>	<i>Deadline for Ballot Application to Be Filed:</i>	<i>Comments:</i>
1. (a) Military electors (b) Hospitalized veterans (outside municipality of residence)	NO	No Deadline	Although there is no deadline to apply, the absentee ballot must be returned by 5 P.M. on the Friday before election.
2. Electors (outside of municipality of residence) who are: (a) Members of the Merchant Marines (b) Members of religious or welfare groups attached to the Armed Forces (c) Civilian employees of the United States government outside the territorial limits of the U.S. (d) Spouses and dependants residing with the foregoing (e) Spouses and dependants residing military electors	YES, however, normal registration deadlines do not apply. May register concurrently with voting.	No Deadline	Although there is no deadline to apply, the absentee ballot must be returned by 5 P.M. on the Friday before election.
3. (a) Civilians outside municipality of residence because of occupation (b) County employees with duties on election day relating to the conduct of the election (c) Electors observing a religious holiday	YES	5 P.M. Tuesday prior to election	May obtain absentee ballot by submitting to your county a written request containing, name, voting residence and signature.
4. Electors who are physically ill or disabled	YES	5 P.M. Tuesday prior to election	May apply to county to get a permanently disabled electors list, in which case an absentee ballot application is sent automatically to elector and supporting declaration is needed only once every four years.

“The right of voting... is the primary right by which other rights are protected.”

– THOMAS PAINE, *DISSERTATION ON FIRST PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT*

WHO MAY REGISTER?

- Those qualified voters who will be at least 18 years of age on or before the day of the next election.
- Those who will have been U.S. citizens for at least one month prior to the next election.
- Those who will have lived in Pennsylvania and their election district at least 30 days prior to the next election.

WHO SHOULD RE-REGISTER?

- The federal National Voter Registration Act prohibits counties from removing a person's name from the voters rolls simply because that person has failed to vote.
- Those who wish to change their party affiliation may do so by either submitting a mail registration application or appearing before an election commissioner, registrar or clerk.
- Those who have moved should contact the appropriate county board of elections for information on re-registration.
- Any change of address submitted to the Department of Transportation for the purpose of drivers licensing shall serve as notification of change of address for voter registration purposes.
- Those whose names have changed. (i.e. maiden name to married name).

HOW TO REGISTER?

- You may register in person at your county courthouse, by mail application, in conjunction with an application for a motor vehicle driver's license or in conjunction with the receipt of services from the following government agencies: public assistance offices, county Clerk of Orphan Court offices (including Marriage License Bureaus), Armed Forces recruitment centers and offices that provide state-funded programs and services to persons with disabilities. If you wish to vote in primary elections, you must choose and state your desired party affiliation on the registration form.

REGISTERING BY MAIL

- Obtain and complete an official mail-in registration application. County-specific applications and generic applications (those that are accepted by all Pennsylvania counties) are available. At least one of these types of forms may be obtained at my office, the county courthouse and other public buildings, such as public libraries, public schools, area agencies on aging and offices that provide unemployment compensation, and from organizations such as political parties and the League of Women Voters.
- Seal the application and drop it in the mail. County-specific forms are postage paid, but generic forms are not (in accordance with federal law). Within 14 days of the mailing the county should send you a voters' identification card. Should more than 14 days go by after mailing and no identification card is received, contact your county Board of Elections.

ABSENTEE VOTING...WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

- Military electors, regardless of whether they are present in their election district and regardless if they are registered to vote, and their spouses and dependants residing with them.

The following apply when outside their municipality of residence on election day:

- Spouses or dependants of people in military service.
- Civilians and government employees – because of government occupation, business or duties – and their spouses and dependants who accompany them.
- Hospitalized veterans.
- Members of the Merchant Marines and their spouses and dependants residing with them.
- Members of religious or welfare groups attached to the Armed Forces and their spouses and dependants residing with them.
- County employees with election-related election day duties.
- Electors observing a religious holiday.
- Physically disabled or ill electors.
- Spouse or dependant accompanying a person employed by the Commonwealth or Federal government.

ABSENTEE VOTING...HOW TO

- Official absentee ballot applications are available at my offices or through the county Board of Elections. Complete the application and return it to the county Board of Elections. You may also make an application for an absentee ballot by sending a letter or other signed document to the county Board of Elections. The letter must contain the same information as is provided on official absentee ballot applications. If your application is approved you will

receive an official absentee ballot. The chart on the reverse explains deadlines and registration requirements.

- **Make sure you apply in a timely fashion because all the official ballots must be voted and returned to county Boards of Elections by 5 p.m. on the Friday before the election.**
- Emergency applications are available for electors who become physically ill or disabled or who are called out of their county of residence because of business, occupation or duties after the normal application deadline. In those cases, emergency applications are accepted until 5 p.m. on the Friday before the election.

VOTER IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

- State and federal election laws require first-time voters and voters casting ballots in a new voting precinct to produce identification to local election officials. The following are approved forms of photo identification:
 - Pennsylvania driver's license or identification card issued by PENNDOT
 - ID issued by any other Commonwealth agency
 - ID issued by the U.S. Government
 - U.S. Passport
 - U.S. Armed Forces ID
 - Student ID
 - Employee ID
- The following are approved forms of non-photo identification (ID must contain the address of the elector):
 - Voter's identification card issued by the voter registration commission
 - Non-photo ID issued by the Commonwealth
 - Non-photo ID issued by the U.S. Government
 - Firearm permit
 - Current utility bill
 - Current bank statement
 - Current paycheck
 - Government check
- First-time voters who are casting absentee ballots should include a photocopy of one of the forms of acceptable identification to their county Board of Elections before absentee ballots are counted.
- Voters who cannot present an approved form of identification or claim to be properly registered and are eligible to vote in an election district but are not listed on the general register may vote by provisional ballot. Provisional ballots are cast and then reviewed by your county Board of Elections to determine their validity.

ASSISTANCE IN VOTING

- If you are physically unable to record your vote or are unable to read, you are permitted assistance in voting. To do so, that fact must be recorded on your registration card. The proper forms and information are available from your county Board of Elections. If this is not recorded on your registration card prior to election day, you can complete a form at the polling place.
- In such cases, you may select any person to assist you, except the judge of election, your employer, your union officer, or their representatives.

ELECTION SCHEDULE AND CALENDAR

- Polls open at 7 a.m. and close at 8 p.m. on Election Day.
- **General Elections** – Are held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November.
- **Primary Elections** – Except in presidential election years – are held on the third Tuesday in May.
- **Primary Elections** – In the presidential election years are held on the fourth Tuesday in April.
- **Municipal Elections** – In which local municipal officials are nominated and elected – are held in odd-numbered years.

TO OBTAIN...

Voter Registration Forms and Absentee Ballot Applications contact my office or the county Board of Elections.

For additional information contact:

**PA Department of State
Bureau of Elections
210 North Office Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120
(717) 787-5280
www.dos.state.pa.us**