

Know Your Rights When Voting

2020 Elections in Massachusetts



Registering to Vote

- Any U.S. Citizen who lives in Massachusetts who is 18 years old on or before Election Day may register to vote provided they are not currently incarcerated for a felony.
- The deadline to register to vote is 20 days before all primaries and general elections. The deadline also applies when you change your address or political party.¹
- You may pre-register to vote once you are 16 years old.
- First time voters must prove they are a resident by using one of the following: a government ID, recent utility bill, rent receipt, lease, copy of a voter registration affidavit, or any other printed identification which contains your name and address.
- You may register to vote:
 - [Online](#) (if you have a signature on file with the Registry of Motor Vehicles).
 - By mail using [this form](#) which you send to your city or town clerk.
 - In person at the office of your [city or town clerk](#).

¹ The recently passed 2020 Voting Law reduced the registration deadline to 10 days. This provision expires 12/31/20

Voting By Mail

- Voting by mail is available to all voters for all elections in 2020. You do not need an excuse to vote by mail this year.
- To vote by mail, all you need to do is:
Complete a [Vote by Mail Application](#);
Deliver your application to your [local election office](#);
Vote when your ballot arrives;
Return your ballot.
- Applications must reach your local election office by **August 26** for the State Primary.
- State Primary ballots need to be back at your local election office by 8 p.m. on **September 1**.
- Applications must reach your local election office by **October 28** for the State Election.
- State Election ballots need to be postmarked no later than **November 3** and must be back at your local election office no later than **November 6**.
- Apply early, in order to have enough time to return your ballot.
- For more information on voting by mail, see the Secretary of the Commonwealth page on [Voting by Mail FAQs](#).

At the Polls

- You DO NOT need to show photo ID to vote. You may be asked for a form of ID if you are voting at a new polling place, are an inactive voter, or if your registration is challenged.
 - Examples of [acceptable identification](#) include: a driver's license, state-issued ID card, recent utility bill, rent receipt, lease, a copy of a voter registration affidavit, or any other printed identification which contains the voter's name and address.
- If you find that you are not on the list where you believe you are registered to vote, you may cast a provisional ballot. More information about provisional ballots is available [here](#).
- You can bring someone to help you in the voting booth.
- If you feel intimidated by anyone at the polling station, REPORT IT right away to election staff or poll observers.
- If you feel threatened or intimidated by election staff or poll observers, CALL 866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683). Or for Spanish: 888 VE-Y-VOTA (888) 839-8682
- Massachusetts Voters' Bill of Rights is available [here](#).

Voter Checklist

- You must be registered to vote at your current address.
- State law allows you to vote from a previous address in a state election for up to six months after you have moved, as long as you have not registered elsewhere.
- You can check your registration by contacting your city or town clerk. A list of city and town clerks can be found [here](#).
- If you have a signature on file with the Registry of Motor Vehicles, you may update your address [here](#).
- You must register to vote at least 20 days before Election Day.
- Make sure you are familiar with the location of your polling place. You can find out where your polling place is [here](#).
- You may preregister to vote once you are 16 years old. Once you become old enough to vote, your local election will mail you an acknowledgement notice, which is confirmation that your name has been moved from the list of pre-registrants to the list of registered voters. Your acknowledgement notice will include your party affiliation and the location of your polling place.
- It is important to keep your local election official informed of any changes to your information. You must submit a new voter registration form if you wish to change your name, address, mailing address, or political affiliation.
- Massachusetts registered voters who are incarcerated serving a sentence on a misdemeanor or held pre-trial are eligible to vote absentee.
- Massachusetts residents who are formerly incarcerated are eligible to vote after serving their sentence and upon completing a voter registration form.