

**I-866-OUR-VOTE
(1-866-687-8683)****Disclaimer:**

This guide is designed for informational purposes only. It is not legal advice and is not intended to create an attorney-client relationship. The Election Protection Coalition does not warrant any information contained in this guide, nor does the Coalition suggest that the information in this guide should be used as a basis to pursue legal advice or decision making.

VOTER REGISTRATION FORMS**1) How can I register to vote?**

You can register to vote by going to your local county election board. You can also register at any:

- Department of Public Safety;
- Motor license agency;
- U.S. post office;
- Public library;
- Oklahoma office administering applications, renewal, recertification, and changes of address for WIC, Medicaid, food stamps, and Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF);
- Oklahoma government agency serving the disabled (including places where you apply for, renew, recertify, or change your address for the Department of Rehabilitation Services, the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, and also disability services offices on the campuses of public colleges and universities). Agencies serving the disabled in their homes can also help with voter registration in the applicant's home; or
- Prospective enlistees may register at Armed Forces recruitment offices.

You may also register by mail by downloading an Oklahoma Voter Registration Application from the website of the State Election Board at www.elections.state.ok.us/vrfrmshl.html. If you prefer to have an application sent to you, you can submit an online request at www.elections.state.ok.us/vrmail.html, request a form by telephone (405-521-2391), or by fax (405-521-6457).

2) Can I register using the National Voter Registration Form?

Yes. It can be downloaded at: <http://www.eac.gov/voter/Register%20to%20Vote>.

There are specific requirements for filling out boxes 6–9 (see the instructions to the form on p.16). Please also see this document at **Question #19** about pending changes.

3) Are there restrictions on registering to vote using a photocopied voter registration form?

No. Applications for voter registration forms are available at www.elections.state.ok.us/vrform.pdf. It should be printed only on 8½ x 11-inch plain white paper. (www.elections.state.ok.us/vrfrmshl.html).

A person or organization expecting to need more than 5,000 forms must ask permission in writing from the Secretary of the State Election Board before copying the forms. The request must state the name, address and telephone number of the person requesting permission to print the forms; how many will be printed; the plans for their use or distribution; the date; and a signature. If permission is granted, the Board will send specifications to be followed. You may not charge people for voter registration

applications. Your local County Election Boards will give you up to 2,000 forms upon request (depending on county population, and subject to refusal if the county's stock would drop below the number it needs itself). The Secretary of the State Election Board will also give you up to 5,000 forms if you ask in writing. Multiple requests from the same party made within a thirty-day period must be in writing and state that all previously received forms have been distributed. There are no restrictions on copying applications before their submission.

4) Are there restrictions regarding the use of my voter registration information?

Yes, but the restrictions are limited to the identity of individuals who decline to register to vote and the identity of the voter registration agency through which a voter registered. Generally, all registration records are available for public inspection and copying during regular office hours. However, certain individual registered voters (judges, district attorneys, assistant district attorneys, law enforcement personnel, correctional officers, and those who are protected by victim's protection orders and their spouses and dependents) may apply to have their residence and mailing addresses restricted (except in certain limited circumstances). In addition, a participant in the Address Confidentiality Program may apply to protect his or her name, address, and precinct number.

COMPLETING VOTER REGISTRATION FORMS

5) How long must I have lived in Oklahoma before I am eligible to register to vote?

You must reside in the Oklahoma county in which you intend to register at least 25 days before a primary or general election.

6) Are there any restrictions on registering to vote using a P.O. Box, college campus, or dorm address?

Yes. Your Voter Registration Application must include the address of your residence, including a full house number, street name or number, apartment or suite number, if applicable, and zip code. If a street address is unavailable, you must provide a physical (directions) or legal (Section-Township-Range) description good enough to place your residence on a map.

The residence address you provide may not be a post office box. A campus or dorm address is acceptable only if it is actually your place of residence. Your residence is the place where you are habitually present and intend to remain for an indefinite period. It is the place that you intend to return to when you leave.

7) If I enter or leave the state for work or school, can I register to vote?

Yes. Applicants may register wherever they can establish residency, and may vote by absentee ballot if they must leave the state for school or work. The residence address you provide may not be a post office box. A campus or dorm address is acceptable only if it is actually your place of residence. Your residence is the place where you are habitually present and intend to remain for an indefinite period. It is the place that you intend to return to when you leave.

8) Do I have to show ID to register to vote?

No. You may, however, voluntarily provide identification during the registration process to meet the requirements of **Question #9**.

9) Do I have to show ID to vote?

Yes, if you submitted a new voter registration application after 2002 (including an application to change your county of residence, residence address, name or political affiliation). If so, you must provide identification when you first vote in a federal election (either at a precinct polling place or an in-person

absentee polling place), unless you sent a copy of acceptable identification when you submitted your application. Acceptable forms of identification include:

- current and valid photo identification (such as a driver's license or military ID);
- a current utility bill;
- a bank statement;
- a government check;
- a paycheck;
- another government document that shows the voter's name and address; or
- a voter identification card issued by your County Election Board (voting only).

If your first time to vote in a federal election is by regular mail absentee ballot, signing the absentee ballot affidavit in the presence of a Notary Public (or anyone who can administer oaths), or before two witnesses (if you are incapacitated), is sufficient.

A registered voter who needs to provide identification when voting, but cannot do so at that time, may cast a provisional ballot to be counted when the voter's identity is verified.

10) What are the rules regarding missing or illegible information on registration forms?

It depends on what information is missing or illegible. Your application will be rejected if it is missing required information. (Please see **Question #19** about pending changes.) The required information includes your:

- full name;
- date of birth;
- residence address (**See Question #6**);
- mailing address, including city and ZIP (may omit if same as residence address);
- Oklahoma driver license number or state identification card number (or the last four digits of your Social Security Number if you do not have either one);
- original signature or original mark; and
- the name and address of a person who helped the applicant complete the application (if the applicant was unable to complete it unassisted).

Your signature must be an original and not a copy. Oklahoma law provides certain procedures if a person cannot sign for him or herself and requires assistance. **See Question #12.**

If your application is rejected, you will receive a mailed rejection notice stating why the application was rejected and what steps, if any, you can take to provide additional information to complete or to correct the application.

Other omissions have lesser effects. Errors regarding political affiliation result in the County Election Board designating you as an Independent (which you can correct). The County Election Board will not reject your application simply because you did not indicate your county of residence if the residence address you provided is within a county.

11) Can a person whose name has changed since registering vote on Election Day?

Yes, but only on the ballot of the precinct where you are registered, and only for that day's election. You must complete and sign a Voter Registration Application Form changing your name and present it with the voter identification card when you go to vote. But the change of name for voting purposes is not effective until the Secretary of the voter's County Election Board approves the application and issues a voter identification card.

REGISTERING OTHERS TO VOTE

12) Can I help people register to vote?

Yes. A third party may deliver or mail completed Voter Registration Applications to the State or County Election Board. Note that there are restrictions on copying and distributing Voter Registration Applications. **See Question #3.**

An applicant must personally sign his or her name on the voter registration form. **See Question #10.** If an applicant cannot sign for him or herself, you may assist exactly as instructed by the applicant. You must also:

- Read the Oath to the applicant so the applicant may determine whether he or she is eligible to vote;
- Read the Important Information printed on the back of the registration form;
- Print the applicant's name on the form where appropriate;
- Check the appropriate box to indicate the applicant's political affiliation.
- Print the applicant's date of birth, driver's license number, the last four digits of the applicant's social security number (if necessary), the applicant's address of residence, mailing address, and county of residence;
- Ask the applicant if he or she has been registered to vote before and indicate the applicant's answer while recording as much information about former registration as possible in the space provided;
- Print the applicant's name where the applicant's signature should go, writing your own initials beside the applicant's printed name and entering the date where appropriate;
- Print your name and address in the space provided on the form.

It is a state or federal felony to:

- knowingly cause a qualified elector to be invalidly registered or an unqualified person to be registered, or (in an election for federal office) to knowingly and willfully procure or submit registration applications known to be materially false, fictitious, or fraudulent.
- knowingly attempt to prevent a qualified elector from becoming registered by means of coercion or any other method, or (in an election for federal office) to knowingly and willfully intimidate, threaten, or coerce a person for registering or attempting to register, or for urging or aiding a person to register or attempt to register or to attempt the same.
- notarize, verify, acknowledge or attest to the signature on the affidavit of an absent voter or on the attestation of an incapacitated voter, without that absent or incapacitated voter appearing personally before that person.

13) Are there any laws regarding submission of voter registration forms by individuals receiving compensation?

No.

14) Do I need to obtain special training to conduct a voter registration drive?

No.

15) Must organizations or individuals engaged in voter registration drives submit their forms within a certain period of time?

No. There are no extra time limits imposed on organizations or individuals engaged in voter registration drives.

16) Do I have to be a county or state resident to work on a voter registration drive there?

No.

REGISTRATION DEADLINES

16) What is the deadline to register to vote?

For the July 29, 2008 primary election, the deadline is **Thursday, July 3, 2008**.

For the November 4, 2008 general election, the deadline is **Friday, October 10, 2008**.

If you register by mail, your application must be post-marked at least 24 days before the election you want to vote in.

17) Is Election Day registration allowed?

No. See **Question #16**.

There is only one exception to this rule. If you are currently registered to vote in Oklahoma but you have *moved within your county* since you registered, you may still vote at the precinct or absentee polling place for your prior residence and may submit a new Voter Registration Application Form when you vote. If you moved outside your county, however, this exception does not apply to you.

18) Does Oklahoma allow for early or absentee voting?

Yes. If you are registered to vote you may vote by absentee ballot without stating any reason. You may vote by traditional absentee voting (not appearing at a polling place) or by in-person absentee voting (which is essentially early voting).

Although you don't have to give a reason to vote by absentee ballot, Oklahoma law makes it easier for certain voters to vote by absentee ballot. These groups of voters include:

- Voters in nursing homes, physically incapacitated voters, and voters who care for physically incapacitated persons who cannot be left alone. Such voters must swear to this status on their application for an absentee ballot;
- Oklahomans in the military or living overseas, including their spouses and dependents. Such voters need not be registered to vote but must only be qualified to register; or
- Voters who become incapacitated in the last week before an election (or after 5 p.m. on the Tuesday before election day). Such voters must sign their application and provide a sworn letter from a doctor.

How to get an absentee ballot

To vote by absentee ballot, you must submit an application to vote by absentee ballot. You can get an application in-person from the State Election Board or any County Election Board. They are also available online at www.elections.state.ok.us/abs_app.html.

Overseas and military voters may use DOD Form 76 for federal elections when voting by regular mail absentee ballot would be too slow because of ballot transit time. If you use Form 76, you must return it by fax or mail. Overseas or military voters stationed outside the United States may also use a federal write-in absentee ballot for federal elections. You can mail or fax completed forms to your County Election Board or personally deliver your own form.

An emergency incapacitated voter must choose someone over the age of sixteen to hand-deliver the application form to the County Election Board. The person may only do so for that one voter in that election.

You can also ask for an absentee ballot by sending a letter to the County Election Board containing the following information:

- Your name,

- Your birthday,
- The address at which you are registered to vote,
- The election for which you want an absentee ballot,
- The address to which the absentee ballot should be sent, and
- your signature.

The deadline to submit your application for an absentee ballot for the July 29, 2008 primary election is 5 pm on **Wednesday, July 23, 2008**. The deadline to submit your application for an absentee ballot for the November 4, 2008 general election is 5 pm on **October 29, 2008**. The only exception to these deadlines is for voters who apply for an emergency incapacitated absentee ballot, who may do so between 5 pm on the Tuesday before Election Day and 7 pm on Election Day.

Returning your absentee ballot

If you are returning your absentee ballot by mail, you must have the ballot to your County Election Board before 7 p.m. on Election Day. In a runoff in a federal election, the ballots of military and overseas voters (who requested an absentee ballot on time) can arrive up to 14 days after the election.

If you are returning your absentee ballot in-person, you may return it to the absentee polling place chosen by your County Election Board from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on the Friday or Monday before Election Day. For state and federal elections only, you also can vote from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the Saturday before Election Day.

VOTER REGISTRATION LEGISLATION

19) Is there any pending legislation that affects voter registration? If so, where is it in the legislative process?

Pending changes to the Oklahoma Administrative Code governing elections and voter registration **will become effective July 1, 2008**. See 25 Okla. Register No. 17 (May 15, 2008) (expected publication of final rules is in 25 Okla. Register No. 19 (June 16, 2008)). These include:

Military voters eligible to use a federal write-in absentee ballot (for federal elections) will change from those in the uniformed services and stationed outside the United States to those on active duty and merely “absent from their voting residence” (adding those stationed outside the State but in the U.S.).

Oklahoma will no longer reject an otherwise valid application solely because it is missing one of the requested identification numbers (driver’s license number or the last four numbers of applicant’s social security number).

Applications to change a registered voter’s address, political affiliation, or name that omit a date of birth will not be rejected if the voter's record can be identified and if the date of birth has previously been provided.

We are unaware of any pending changes to the Oklahoma Statutes on voter registration, but there were some recent developments regarding voter identification:

Effective January 1, 2009, Oklahoma Senate Bill 1150 would have required voters to provide identification or affirm the voter’s identity, including for in-person absentee ballot voting and emergency incapacitated voters. Acceptable forms of identification were to include a voter identification card, driver license, passport, state identification card, current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government or tribal document that shows

the voter's name and address. The bill, as amended, was approved by the House on April 14, 2008; the Senate adopted the House amendments May 6, 2008, but did not pass the measure.

Other bills were introduced and referred to committee, but never passed or voted on. These addressed issues like restoring the voting rights of felons and permitting election-day voter registration. The 2008 session of the Oklahoma legislature has now adjourned.

19) What statutes are affected?

None. The statutes about voter identification that might have been affected are under Articles VII and XIV of Title 26 of the Oklahoma Statutes. The specific statutory sections are Oklahoma Statute title 26, § 7-114; 14-113.2, 115.1, 115.4.

The regulations that will be amended effective July 1, 2008 are in Chapters 15 (Voter Registration) and 30 (Absent Voting) of Title 230 of the Oklahoma Administrative Code. The specific statutory sections are Okla. Admin. Code §§ 230:15-5-84(b)(7); 15-5-85(a); 15-9-18(a)(6); 15-9-31(b); 30-13-1.

20) Who should I contact if I have further questions?

For more information, contact the Oklahoma State Election Board:

Oklahoma State Election Board
PO Box 53156
Oklahoma City, OK 73152
405-521-2391

You may also contact your County Election Board. The contact information for your local board is available at www.elections.state.ok.us/cebinf.html.

21) Are there helpful web resources I should know about?

The Oklahoma State Election Board has a website providing information on the election process: www.elections.state.ok.us. This site includes resources such as Frequently Asked Questions (about changing your address, replacing lost voter ID cards, voting early, special provisions for military officers and getting an absentee ballot), and additional information on voter registration, and absentee ballots.

The National Campaign for Fair Elections is another resource:
<http://www.nationalcampaignforfairelections.org/pages/oklahoma>