

**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) Where can voter registration forms be obtained?**

There are several ways by which a person can obtain a voter registration form. The form can be downloaded from the Vermont Secretary of State's Elections and Campaign Finance Division website at <http://vermont-elections.org/elections/register tovote.html>. Voter registration forms are also available from the town clerks and voter registration agencies.

Additionally, any application for, or renewal of, a Vermont motor vehicle driver's license contains a voter registration portion. Signing the voter registration portion of a driver's license application serves as an application to register to vote.

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

No. Vermont Election Laws do not address copying voter registration forms. However, an original signature is required on voter registration forms.

3) Are there restrictions on the use of the National Voter Registration Form?

No. The National Voter Registration Form can be used in Vermont. Vermont does not require political party affiliation and race/ethnicity identification so those fields may be left blank. See <http://www.eac.gov/voter/Register%20to%20Vote>.

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

Yes. In Vermont, each registered voter is included on a statewide computerized checklist. Although the checklist serves as the official voter registration list, even the access of town clerks and local election officials is limited. The Secretary of State is required to provide adequate security to prevent unauthorized access to the checklist.

Certain information contained on voter registration forms is not part of the public record and there are restrictions applicable to the use of the information. Specifically, any person that wants a copy of the statewide voter checklist must swear or affirm, under penalty of perjury, that the checklist will not be used for commercial purposes.

5) Are there restrictions regarding pre-filling information on registration forms?

No. The Vermont Election Laws do not address pre-filling information on registration forms.

COMPLETING VOTER REGISTRATION FORMS

6) How long must you live in a county before you are eligible to register to vote?

Vermont does not require a set amount of time before an individual may register to vote. As soon as a person moves to Vermont, he or she is eligible to register. The only requirement is that the applicant reside in Vermont. A resident is defined as a person that is “domiciled in [the] state as evidenced by an intent to maintain a principal dwelling place in the state indefinitely and to return there if temporarily absent coupled with an act or acts consistent with that district.” This is a subjective standard, so a person that considers himself or herself a resident of Vermont may register to vote.

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

Yes. A person may register to vote using any address he or she considers to be his or her principal residence. Because a P.O. Box is not a residence a person may not register to vote using a P.O. Box.

8) If I enter or leave the state because of work or school, can I register to vote?

Yes. A person may register to vote using any address he or she considers to be his or her principal residence. Although the housing may be temporary, if the person intends to reside in Vermont, then that person may register.

9) Are there any identification requirements to register to vote?

Generally no. Identification is not required for voters registering in person. However, first-time voters that registered by mail and did not provide identification at registration are required to do so at the polling place.

The Vermont voter registration form does require the applicant’s Vermont Driver's License Number. If the applicant does not have a Vermont Driver's License, then the last four digits of the applicant’s Social Security Number are sufficient. If the applicant does not have a Social Security Number, the town clerk will contact the Vermont Secretary of State and have a unique identifier assigned to the applicant.

10) Are there any identification requirements in order to vote?

Generally no. Vermont does not require identification to vote if the voter is not a first-time voter in the municipality. If the person is a first-time voter in the municipality that registered to vote by mail, and did not provide identification prior to the polls opening, then the voter is required to present any one of the following:

- a valid photo identification;
- a copy of a current utility bill;
- a copy of a current bank statement;
- a copy of a government check or paycheck;
- or any other government document that shows the current name and address of the voter.

If the first-time voter does not have any identification, he or she can still vote on a provisional basis.

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

If a form is missing information or is illegible, then the town clerk will attempt to contact the applicant to complete the registration process. If the town clerk is unable to reach the applicant, the clerk will hold the form until the applicant attempts to vote.

On Election Day, the applicant will still be able to vote. If a person's name does not appear on the voter checklist for any reason, the person can still vote so long as he or she attests that he or she applied to register to vote prior to the deadline.

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

Yes. A person already registered to vote under a name that has been legally changed since originally registering may still vote on Election Day. However, the voter's name must appear on the voter checklist, so the voter will need to vote under his or her old name.

A voter is required to notify the town clerk of a name change so that the voter's name can be changed on the checklist. If the voter provided the information to the department of motor vehicles or a voter registration agency then there is no need to notify the town clerk. Otherwise the voter can use the voter registration form to notify the town clerk of a name change.

REGISTERING OTHERS TO VOTE

13) What are the laws regarding third-party registration?

Vermont Election Law does not address third-party registrations. There are suggestions for conducting voter registration drives on the Secretary of State's Elections and Campaign Finance Division web pages at: http://vermont-elections.org/elections/voter_registration_drive.html.

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

No. Vermont Election Law permits the submission of voter registration forms by individuals receiving compensation.

15) Is training required for voter registration drives?

No. Vermont Election Law does not require training.

16) Are volunteers or staff of voter registration drives required to be county or state residents?

No. Vermont Election Law does not require volunteers or staff assisting in voter registration drives to be residents.

REGISTRATION DEADLINES

17) What is the deadline to register to vote?

All applications to vote must be submitted or postmarked no later than 5:00 p.m. on the Wednesday preceding Election Day. If an applicant is not eligible to vote prior to the voter registration deadline, but will be eligible on or before the Election Day, the applicant may provide a written notice of intent to register to the town clerk. The notice of intent must be filed prior to the voter registration deadline. The applicant then has until the close of the polls on Election Day to submit the completed voter registration form to the town clerk.

For the 2008 general election, the deadline to register to vote is Wednesday, October 29, 2008 at 5:00 p.m. All applications must be submitted or postmarked by that time.

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

Organizations or individuals engaged in voter registration drives must submit their forms to the town clerk where the applicant lives before the filing deadline for the next election. Also, as noted in

Question 17, where a person is not eligible to vote prior to the voter registration deadline, but is eligible to vote on or before the Election Day, and the person submitted a written notice of intent to register with the town clerk before the voter registration deadline. He or she has until the close of the polls on Election Day to complete the registration process.

19) Is Election Day registration allowed?

Generally no. The one exception, as noted in **Question 17**, is where a person is not eligible to vote prior to the voter registration deadline, but is eligible to vote on or before the Election Day, and the person submitted a written notice of intent to register with the town clerk before the voter registration deadline. He or she has until the close of the polls on Election Day to complete the registration process.

20) Does state election law allow for early or absentee voting?

Vermont permits early and absentee voting. A voter may apply for an early or absentee ballot until 5:00 p.m. or the closing of the town clerk's office, whichever time is later, on the day preceding the election.

VOTER REGISTRATION LEGISLATION

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

The Vermont General Assembly recently passed an act that changes how the voter's oath is administered. The oath can now be administered by anyone over the age of 18 including the applicants themselves. The act becomes effective on July 1, 2008.

22) What applicable statutes are possibly affected?

17 V.S.A. § 2124. The language of the amended statute can be seen at <http://www.leg.state.vt.us/docs/legdoc.cfm?URL=/docs/2008/acts/ACT113.HTM>.

23) Are there any helpful elections official contacts?

For more information, contact the Vermont Secretary of State's Elections and Campaign Finance Division at:

Elections Division
Vermont Secretary of State
26 Terrace Street
Montpelier, VT 05609-1101
In-State: (800) 439-8683
Outside VT: (802) 828-2464
mshea@sec.state.vt.us

24) What web resources are available?

The Vermont Secretary of State's Elections and Campaign Finance Division has a website dedicated to providing information on Vermont elections: <http://vermont-elections.org/soshome.htm>. This site includes resources such as frequently asked questions, polling place locations, and a "How to Vote" instructional video.

Vermont's Election Laws can be viewed at:

<http://www.michie.com/vermont/lpext.dll?f=templates&fn=main-h.htm&cp=vtcode>.

National Campaign for Fair Elections: <http://www.nationalcampaignforfairelections.org/pages/vermont>