
KNOW YOUR RIGHTS NEW YORK

Here's what you need to know if you're voting in New York in 2012:

VOTER REGISTRATION

Where can I register to vote?

You can register in person at your county board of elections, at all DMV offices when you apply for or renew your New York state driver's license or ID card or at a wide variety of New York state agencies. You can find a list of county board of elections offices at www.elections.ny.gov/CountyBoards.html.

You also can register to vote by mailing a voter registration form to your county board of elections office. You can download a voter registration form from the secretary of state's website at www.elections.ny.gov/VotingRegister.html. If you would prefer for a registration form to be mailed to you, you can call the secretary of state's hot line at 1-800-FOR-VOTE.

What if I just need to make a change to my registration?

The voter registration form should be used as a change of address form. If you are changing your name or address, your form should be received by your county board of elections at least 20 days before a special, primary or general election to be processed and entered in time for that election.

When is the deadline to register?

For the June 26 primary, if you are mailing your voter registration form, your application must be postmarked no later than June 1 and received by a board of elections no later than June 6. If you are registering in person, your application must be received no later than June 1. If you are changing your address, your form must be received by a county board of elections by June 6 to be processed and entered in the records in time for the federal primary election.

For the Nov. 6 general election, if you are mailing your voter registration form, your application must be postmarked no later than Oct. 12 and received by a board of elections no later than Oct. 17. If you are registering in person, your application must be received no later than Oct. 12. If you are changing your address, your form must be received by a county board of elections by Oct. 17.

Are there any ID requirements?

On the voter registration form, you will be asked to provide your DMV number (either your driver's license number or nondriver ID number) or the last four digits of your Social Security number. If you do not have a DMV or Social Security number, you may use a valid photo ID, a current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, government check or some other government document that shows your name and address. You may include a copy of one of those types of ID when you mail this form. If elections officials are unable to verify your identity before Election Day, you will be asked for ID when you vote for the first time.

PHOTO ID REQUIREMENTS

Am I required to show a photo ID to vote in New York?

No, you do not need a photo ID to vote in New York. The only time you will be asked to provide proof of your identity is if you did not provide your DMV number, the last four digits of your Social Security number or a valid document proving your identity when you registered to vote (please see the previous section on voter registration).

ABSENTEE VOTING

Who is eligible to vote by absentee ballot?

You are eligible to vote by absentee ballot if you will be:

- Absent from your county or, if a resident of New York City, absent from the city, on Election Day;

- Unable to appear at the polls due to temporary or permanent illness or disability; or because you are the primary caregiver of one or more individuals who are ill or physically disabled;
- A patient or inmate in a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs hospital; or
- Detained in jail awaiting grand jury action or confined in prison after conviction for an offense other than a felony.

Where can I apply to vote by absentee ballot?

Applications for absentee ballots are available at your county board of elections or online at www.elections.ny.gov/VotingAbsentee.html. If you download a form, mail it to your county board of elections, not the secretary of state's office. You can find a list of county board of elections offices at www.elections.ny.gov/CountyBoards.html or by calling 1-800-FOR-VOTE.

What is the deadline to apply to vote by absentee ballot?

For the June 26 primary, the last day to postmark your application is June 19. The last day to apply in person is June 25.

For the Nov. 6 general election, the last day to postmark your application is Oct. 30. The last day to apply in person is Nov. 5.

When do I have to return my ballot?

For the June 26 primary, the last day to postmark your ballot is June 25 and your ballot must be received by the county board no later than July 3. The last day to return your ballot in person to your county board is by the close of the polls on Election Day.

For the Nov. 6 general election, the last day to postmark your ballot is Nov. 5 and your ballot must be received by the county board no later than Nov. 13. The last day to return your ballot in person to your county board is by the close of the polls on Election Day.

If you have any questions about voting, contact the secretary of state's office at www.elections.ny.gov/ or call 1-800-FOR-VOTE.