



# NEW YORK VOTER REGISTRATION AND ABSENTEE VOTING INFORMATION

## IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES

Deadline to Register	Deadline to Request Absentee Ballot	Deadline to Return Absentee Ballot	Early Voting	Election Day Voting
<p><b>Mail:</b> Applications must be postmarked no later than Oct. 9 and received no later than Oct. 14.</p> <p><b>Online or in person:</b> Oct. 9.</p> <p>Notices of change of address for registered voters must be received by Oct. 14.</p>	<p><b>Mail:</b> Applications must be postmarked by Oct. 27.</p> <p><b>In person:</b> The last day to apply in person for an absentee ballot is Nov. 2.</p> <p><i>New York plans to introduce an online portal for absentee ballot applications.</i></p>	<p><b>Mail:</b> Ballots must be postmarked by Nov. 3.</p> <p><b>In person:</b> Ballots must be delivered in person to the county board of elections or a polling location by Nov. 3.</p>	Oct. 24–Nov. 1.	Nov. 3, from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Visit [WorkersFirstVoteUnion.org](https://WorkersFirstVoteUnion.org) to easily check your registration status, apply to vote by mail, and get all the information you need to vote safely, securely and on time.

This memo has been prepared by the AFL-CIO for our state, area and local central labor bodies, affiliated unions and constituency groups to use in planning voter registration and mail/absentee ballot programs in 2020. This memo is for informational purposes only and is current as of Sept. 11, 2020. It is essential that you check the links provided throughout this document for any changes and consult with your attorney about any specific questions you have.

## VOTER REGISTRATION

### Who can register to vote in New York?

In order to register to vote in New York State, a person must:

- Be a citizen of the United States
- Be 18 years old (you may preregister at 16 or 17 but cannot vote until you are 18)
- Be a resident of New York and of the county, city or village where you will be voting for a minimum of 30 days before the election
- Not be in prison or on parole for a felony conviction (unless parolee pardoned or restored rights of citizenship)
- Not be adjudged mentally incompetent by a court
- Not claim the right to vote elsewhere

### What about voting restrictions for people with prior felony convictions?

In general, a person with a felony conviction is entitled to register and vote once they have been discharged from parole. More information about voting after a felony conviction is available from the [New York State Unified Court System](#) and from the [ACLU of New York](#).

### How and where to register to vote in New York?

#### In person:

You can register to vote in person at your [county board of elections](#) or at any [New York agency-based voter registration center](#).

You also can use the AFL-CIO's voter registration tool at [WorkersFirstVoteUnion.org](https://WorkersFirstVoteUnion.org), which will walk you through the process for your state.



**Online:**

If you already have a New York State Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)-issued identification, you can register to vote on the [DMV website](#).

**By Mail:**

Complete the following voter registration form, print and sign (digital signatures not accepted) and then mail to your [county board of elections](#) along with a copy of one valid form of ID:

- [English version](#)
- [Spanish version](#)
- [Accessible English form online](#)
- [Accessible Spanish form online](#)
- You also can request a New York state voter registration form by mail by entering your name into the [mailing list database](#), or by calling 1-800-FOR-VOTE.

**Do I need identification in New York to register or to vote?**

- Registered voters generally do not need to show ID to vote.
- Voters who did not provide ID when registering—such as by listing a state ID number or a Social Security number on their registration form—will be asked to provide ID when voting for the first time.
  - > Acceptable forms of ID include a current and valid photo ID, a current utility bill or bank statement, a government check or paycheck, or any other government document that shows the voter's name and address.
  - > If a voter has not provided ID by Election Day, they still are allowed to vote by affidavit ballot.

**My union is going to conduct a voter registration drive. What else do I need to know?**

New York does not require notice or training for individuals or organizations that conduct voter registration drives. However, registration drives should follow these guidelines:

- Do not fill in missing information or make corrections on a registration form without the consent of the person registering to vote. Review the completed form while the registrant still is with you (and be sure they have checked the boxes answering the questions about their citizenship and age), so you can ask them to correct any errors or omissions before you take the form.
- Do not offer any form of compensation or other incentive to potential registrants for completing a voter registration form.
- A voter's date of birth, signature, full or partial Social Security number and driver's license or other ID number must be removed before photocopying a completed application.
- Do not pay anyone based on the number of voter registration forms they collect.

**When do voters need to update their voter registration? How do they update it?****Change of address:**

- Voters can update their registration [online](#), in person or by mail, using the voter registration form.

**Change of party enrollment:**

- The voter registration form should be used to change party enrollment from one party to another or to enroll for the first time in a party.

## ABSENTEE VOTING IN NEW YORK

On Aug. 20, Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed a new law that allows ALL New York voters to vote by absentee ballot in the November election. Voters must apply for an absentee ballot and select the reason they need to vote absentee. Voters who are requesting an absentee ballot due to concerns about the risk of contracting COVID-19 should select “illness,” which the new law defines to include the risk of contracting or spreading a disease to other members of the public.

### How can a voter request an absentee ballot?

#### Online (coming soon):

The New York State Board of Elections has announced plans to create a website where voters can request an absentee ballot online. That online request system is not yet set up, but voters should check the [state board of elections website](#) for updates.

#### By Mail:

Voters can print an absentee ballot application form or write a letter and send it to their [county board of elections](#).

- Download [English form](#) (📄 pdf 485KB)
- Download [Spanish form](#) (📄 pdf 521KB)
- In order to be a valid application for an absentee ballot, a letter must include the voter’s name and date of birth, voter registration address, address where the ballot should be sent, the reason for the request (e.g., “illness” for voters who wish to vote absentee due to the risk of contracting COVID-19) and the voter’s signature. If you apply for an absentee ballot by letter, a copy of the absentee ballot application will be sent to you along with your ballot—it must be completed and returned with your ballot as well.

#### By email or fax:

Voters also can send an application or a letter by email or by fax to their [county board of elections](#).

#### Delivered in person:

You may personally deliver your absentee ballot application to your [county board of elections](#).

*Note: If you cannot pick up your ballot, or will not be able to receive it through the mail, you have the right to designate someone to pick it up for you. Only that person designated on your application may pick up and deliver your ballot.*

### How can a voter return their voted absentee ballot?

- By mail or in person to their [county board of elections](#)
- By bringing it to an early voting poll site
- By bringing it to a poll site on Nov. 3 before 9 p.m.

You also can use the AFL-CIO’s absentee ballot request tool at [WorkersFirstVoteUnion.org](https://www.workersfirstvoteunion.org), which will walk you through the process for your state.

### What is the deadline to request an absentee ballot?

- The last day to postmark an application or letter of application by mail for an absentee ballot, or to apply online, by email or by fax is Oct. 27.
- The last day to apply in person for an absentee ballot is Nov. 2.

### What is the deadline to return a voted absentee ballot?

Voted ballots must be delivered in person by Nov. 3, or postmarked by that day and received within seven days. All ballots without a postmark but received by Nov. 4 also will be considered timely returned.

## OTHER VOTING INFORMATION

More information, including in-person polling locations, is available online at [vote.nyc.gov](https://vote.nyc.gov).

### Time Off to Vote

- New York State employees are eligible for up to two hours of paid time off to vote if they do not have “sufficient time to vote.” An employee is deemed to have “sufficient time to vote” if an employee has four consecutive hours to vote either from the opening of the polls to the beginning of their work shift, or four consecutive hours between the end of a working shift and the closing of the polls.
- An employee must notify an employer at least two working days prior to their intention to take paid time off to vote, but not more than 10 working days.

If you need more information or have issues on Election Day, contact the nonpartisan Election Protection Hotline, sponsored by a coalition of civil rights groups and unions.

### ELECTION PROTECTION HOTLINES

Call in English	<b>866-OUR-VOTE</b> or <b>866-687-8683</b>
Call in Spanish/English	<b>888-VE-Y-VOTA</b> or <b>888-839-8682</b>
Call in Asian Languages/English	<b>888-API-VOTE</b> or <b>888-274-8683</b>
Call in Arabic/English	<b>844-YALLA-US</b> or <b>844-925-5287</b>
Or text	<b>OUR VOTE</b> to <b>97779</b>

As the coronavirus continues to impact Americans across the country, there has been a staggering decrease in the number of people who are able to work the polls—which could mean closed polling places and long delays during the November election. The AFL-CIO is proud to partner with **Power the Polls**, a first-of-its-kind initiative to recruit poll workers to ensure a safe, fair election for all voters. Will you help us address our nation’s critical poll worker shortage? You can help make sure we have a safe, fair and efficient election for all voters, and potentially get paid to do it. Sign up to Power the Polls today.

[powerthepolls.org/aflcio](https://powerthepolls.org/aflcio)