

LET ME VOTE



NORTH CAROLINA

Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 4, 2014

This guide is designed to help protect everyone’s right to vote. Share it, keep it handy, and take it to the polls on Election Day.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) is a nationwide, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with more than 500,000 members dedicated to defending the principles of liberty and equality embodied in the Constitution and our nation’s civil rights laws. The ACLU does not endorse or oppose any candidate or party, but we believe that no civil right in our democracy is more important than the right to vote.

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★ QUICK TIPS FOR VOTERS ★

- Check your voter registration status by calling the North Carolina State Board of Elections at (866) 522-4723 or going to https://www.ncsbe.gov/webapps/voter_search/.
- Locate your polling place and note the hours of operation by calling the North Carolina State Board of Elections at (866) 522-4723 or going to http://www.ncsbe.gov/webapps/pollingplace_search/.
- North Carolina’s new voter ID law is NOT in effect for the November 2014 elections. Most people do not need ID to vote. See below for more info.
- Vote early in the day to avoid the last-minute rush, especially if you plan to vote on November 4.
- Check to see if your polling place is accessible (if you have a mobility disability and need the access).
- Read all instructions carefully. Take your time,¹ and ask for help if you need it.

 **2014 – IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES** 

Friday, Apr. 11	Deadline to register for the primary election ²
Thursday, Apr. 24	Early voting begins for the primary election
Saturday, May 3	Early voting ends for the primary election
Tuesday, Apr. 29	Deadline to request an absentee ballot for the primary election. Request must be received (not postmarked) by 5 p.m. on this date. ³
Saturday, May 3	Early voting ends for the primary election
Tuesday, May 6	Primary Election ⁴
Friday, Oct. 10	Deadline to register for the general election
Tuesday, Oct. 28	Deadline to request an absentee ballot for the general election. Request must be received (not postmarked) by 5 p.m. on this date. ⁵
Thursday, Oct. 23	Early voting begins ⁶
Saturday, Nov. 1	Early voting ends ⁷
Tuesday, Nov. 4	General Election

 **WHO CAN VOTE** 

Can I vote in North Carolina?

- You can vote in the November 4 election if you’re registered to vote by October 10, 2014.⁸
- You can register if you meet all of the following qualifications: (1) you’re a U.S. citizen; (2) you’re a North Carolina resident; and (3) you’ll be at least 18 years old on Election Day. If you’ve been convicted of a felony, you can register once you’ve completed the terms of your sentence, including probation and parole.⁹

What if I’m a student

- You can register to vote at whatever address you consider your primary residence. This can be your school address OR your home address, but not both.¹⁰

What if I have a physical disability?

- You have the right to an accessible voting place. It should be easy to get in the door, to the registration table and to your voting booth.¹¹
- You have the right to an accessible voting machine.¹² This machine can read the ballot to you and record your vote privately. Every polling place must have one.¹³

What if I've been convicted of a crime?

- If you have been charged with a crime but not convicted, you can vote.
- If you were convicted of a misdemeanor, you can vote, even if you are in jail.
- If you were convicted of a felony:
 - You cannot vote if you are in prison.
 - You cannot vote if you are on parole or probation.
 - You can vote if you have completed the terms of your sentence, including parole or probation.
 - You can vote if you were pardoned.¹⁴

What if I'm homeless?

- You don't need a home to register, but you do have to identify a place of residence. This can be a street corner, a park, a shelter, or any other place where you usually sleep.¹⁵ You also have to identify a place where you can receive mail, like a shelter or a post office box.¹⁶

What if I've moved?

- If you moved to a new county:
 - If you moved *less than 30 days before the election*, you can vote at the polling place for your old address.¹⁷
 - If you moved *30 or more days before the election*, you need to re-register to vote in your new county by October 10.¹⁸ If you do not re-register by the deadline, you will not be able to vote in the November 4 election.
- If you moved to a new address in the same county:
 - If you moved *less than 30 days before the election*, you can vote at the polling place for your old address.¹⁹
 - If you moved *30 or more days before the election*, update your address in writing with the county board of elections.²⁰
 - You can update your address on a voter registration form or a signed letter that includes your full name, former address, new address, and a sworn statement

that you moved at least 30 days before the next election.²¹

- You can notify the county board of elections of your new address by mailing, faxing, or scanning and emailing the signed letter.²²
- When the county board of elections receives your updated address, it will mail you a notice listing your new polling place.²³
- To avoid delays at the polls, try to send your updated address to the county board of elections by October 10.²⁴
- If you moved to a new address within the same precinct in your county and did not update your address by October 10, you can still vote if you update your address at your polling place.²⁵ A poll worker will ask you to sign an affirmation that you changed your address at the polling place before you cast your ballot.²⁶
- If you moved to a different precinct in your county, you can still vote, but you have to vote at your new precinct or at a designated central voting location.²⁷ A poll worker will ask you to sign an affirmation that you changed your address at the polling place before you cast your ballot.²⁸

What if I've changed my name?

- Update your name in writing with the county board of elections.²⁹
 - You can update your name on a voter registration form or any other signed document that includes your former full name, your new full name, and your address.³⁰
 - To avoid delays at the polls, try to update your name by October 10.³¹ If you can't update your name by October 10, you can still vote, as long as you report your name change to the chief judge at your polling place or send a letter with your absentee ballot.³²

How do I know if I'm registered?

- Check your registration status online at https://www.ncsbe.gov/webapps/voter_search/, or by calling your county board of elections. You can find the contact information for your county board of elections here: <http://www.ncsbe.gov/webapps/CBESearch/>.



How do I register?

- You can register to vote:
 - 1) in person, by filling out a voter registration application form at your county board of elections office,³³
 - 2) by mail, by filling out a mail-in voter registration application form and put it in

the mail to your county board of elections by October 10. Your mailed application must be postmarked by October 10.;³⁴

- 3) by fax or email, by printing and filling out an online voter registration form at <http://www.ncsbe.gov/ncsbe/Portals/0/FilesP/NCVRRRegFormv102013eng.pdf>. Fax or email it to your county board of elections by October 10, but remember when faxing a registration form, that the original form must also be mailed or otherwise delivered by October 15;³⁵ or
 - 4) when you apply for services at the Division of Motor Vehicles and state agencies that provide public assistance (such as Medicaid, WIC, and food stamps) or services to people with disabilities. You may also be able to register at many other state and federal offices and agencies.³⁶
- You can get mail-in voter registration forms from your local elections office, from most libraries, colleges and high schools, by calling the North Carolina State Board of Elections Office at (866) 522-4723, or online at <http://www.ncsbe.gov/ncsbe/Portals/0/FilesP/NCVRRRegFormv102013eng.pdf>.

What's the registration deadline?

- Friday, October 10 at 5 p.m. If you mail your registration application, it must be postmarked by this date.³⁷ If you email, fax, or personally deliver your registration application, it must be received by this date.

What if I miss the deadline?

- You won't be able to vote in the November 4 election, but you can register to vote in future elections.



Can I vote before Election Day?

- Yes. Any registered voter can vote before Election Day by casting an absentee ballot by mail or in person at a one-stop voting center.³⁸

What's absentee voting in person?

- Absentee voting in person, or one-stop voting, allows any registered voter to vote in person at the county board of elections office beginning on Thursday, October 23 and ending on Saturday, November 1, at 1 p.m.³⁹ Counties may designate additional one-stop voting locations, but every county must hold one-stop voting at the county board of elections office.⁴⁰
- Contact your county board of registrars for the location and hours of your county board of elections office and to find out if there are additional one-stop voting locations in your county.⁴¹

What's an absentee ballot by mail?

- An absentee ballot by mail is a ballot that you submit by mail. If you vote using an absentee ballot, you do not have to go to the polls. Any eligible voter may vote using an absentee ballot.⁴² To be valid, an absentee ballot by mail must be signed by two witnesses OR a notary public.⁴³ A witness cannot be your employer, employee, or manager, unless he/she is also your close relative.⁴⁴

How do I get an absentee ballot?

- Submit an application no later than 5 p.m. on October 28. Your application must be received (not postmarked) by this date.⁴⁵ You can get an application for an absentee ballot at your county board of elections office or you can download one at <http://www.ncsbe.gov/ncsbe/Portals/0/FilesP/AbsBallotReqFormv112013.pdf>. If your application is approved, the ballot will be mailed to you.

What's the deadline for returning my absentee ballot?

- If you return your absentee ballot in person, it must be received by your county board of elections no later than 5 p.m. on November 4.⁴⁶ However, North Carolina does allow a three-day grace period for mailed absentee ballots that are postmarked before November 4 and received by the county board of elections by 5 p.m. on November 7.⁴⁷ Try to mail your absentee ballot early to make sure the county board of elections receives it in time.

VOTING ON ELECTION DAY

When is Election Day?

- Tuesday, November 4, 2014.

When are the polls open?

- Polling places will be open from 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.⁴⁸ You have the right to vote if you're in line or inside your polling place when the polls close.⁴⁹

Can I get time off from work to vote?

- Maybe. The law doesn't require employers to give their employees time off from work to vote, but your employer might have its own policy allowing you to do so. Ask well before Election Day.

Where do I vote?

- On Election Day, you have to vote at your assigned polling place.
- Your assigned polling place will be listed on the voter registration card you receive in the mail when you register.⁵⁰

- If you don't have your card, call your county board of elections or look up your polling place online at http://www.ncsbe.gov/webapps/pollingplace_search/.

What if I am disabled and my polling place is not accessible?

- You have two options. Request a transfer to an accessible polling place OR request curbside voting.
 - To request a transfer to an accessible polling place, go to your assigned polling place on Election Day and announce your request for a transfer to an accessible polling place.⁵¹ You can announce your request curbside, without entering the polling place.⁵² You have the right to an accessible polling place and an accessible voting machine.
 - To request curbside voting, go to your assigned polling place on Election Day and ask to vote curbside.⁵³ You can also send someone into the polling place to request curbside voting on your behalf. After you sign a form saying that you are registered to vote but unable to enter the polling place, poll workers will bring a ballot or voting machine outside so you can vote.⁵⁴
- Bring one or more people to assist you. If you are unable to enter the voting booth or mark your ballot because of your physical disability, or if you are unable to read the ballot because you are blind or cannot read, you have the right to have anyone you choose assist you as long as the person is not your employer, an agent of your employer, or an officer or agent of your labor union.⁵⁵

What if I am blind or I have a learning disability and I cannot read the ballot?

- You have the right to an accessible voting machine.⁵⁶ This is like a computer that reads the ballot to you. It allows you to choose your candidate and cast your vote by pushing buttons. Every polling place must have at least one of these machines.⁵⁷

Can I get a ballot in my native language?

- Election materials in North Carolina are available in English only, but you have the right to bring someone to translate for you at the polls, as long as that person is not your employer, an agent of your employer, or an officer or agent of your labor union.⁵⁸

What if there are long lines?

- Tell a poll worker if it is hard for you to stand in long lines because of a physical or mental health condition or disability.
- Elections officials must help you if they can. For example, if it is hard for you to stand, they should give you a chair or a place to sit while you wait. If the crowds or noise are too hard for you, they could find you a quiet place to wait until it is your turn to vote. Or they could call you on your cell phone when it is close to your turn, and you could wait in a place of your choice.

What if I need help in the voting booth?

- If you need help because of a physical disability or because you can't read the ballot, tell a poll worker when you get to your polling place. You have the right to vote privately and independently on an accessible voting machine.⁵⁹ You also have the right to have anyone you choose assist you in the voting booth, including a poll worker.⁶⁰ That person cannot be your employer, an agent of your employer, or an officer or agent of your labor union.⁶¹
- If you need language assistance, bring an interpreter with you to the polls. You have a right to bring an interpreter with you to communicate with poll workers and to translate the ballot.
- If you need instructions on how to use the voting equipment, ask a poll worker for help. Poll workers are required to help you at any time you ask—even after you have entered the voting booth.



Do I have to show ID?

- No.⁶² You ONLY need ID if (1) you're a first-time voter in North Carolina; (2) you registered to vote by mail on or after January 1, 2003; and (3) you didn't provide any identification when you registered.⁶³

The North Carolina legislature recently passed a new law requiring voters to show photo ID, but that law is NOT in effect for the 2014 elections.

What are the accepted forms of ID?

- If you need to show ID, be sure to bring something that shows your name and address. Accepted forms of ID include:
 - a current, valid photo ID, like a driver's license or employee ID;
 - a copy of a utility bill no more than six months old that shows your name and address;
 - a bank statement no more than six months old that shows your name and address;
 - a government check no more than six months old that shows your name and address; OR
 - any other current government document that shows your name and current address, like a social security, disability, or WIC benefits letter.⁶⁴

What if I don't have any ID?

- Most people don't need ID to vote. If you do, it doesn't need to have your photo. Remember that you can use a utility bill, a bank statement, a government check, or any government document that shows your name and address.⁶⁵

What if I go to the polls without an ID?

- Most people can vote without showing ID. If you do need to show ID because you're a first-time voter, get your ID and return to the polls.

PROBLEMS AT THE POLLS

What if I'm not on the voter list?

- First, ask a poll worker to check the list again and to confirm that you're at the right polling place. Offer to spell your name.
- If you're at the right polling place but your name isn't on the voter list, ask for a provisional ballot. You have the right to cast a provisional ballot, even if your name is not on the voter list, as long as you can swear that you believe you are registered to vote.⁶⁶

What is a provisional ballot?

- A provisional ballot is used to record your vote when there's an unresolved question about your eligibility.⁶⁷

Will my provisional ballot be counted?

- Your provisional ballot will only be counted if election officials determine after the election that you were eligible to vote.⁶⁸ If you cast a provisional ballot, bring any documentation you have that can prove that you were registered to vote at your polling place to your county board of elections before close of business on Thursday, Nov. 13. For example, if you registered to vote at the DMV, bring a copy of the documentation that you received from the DMV that day.⁶⁹ Most provisional ballots aren't counted, and you should use one only if there's no way for you to vote on a regular ballot.

What if I go to the wrong polling place?

- Go to the right polling place. You can ask a poll worker to help you find the polling place where you're registered. You can also call your county board of elections or look up your polling place online at http://www.ncsbe.gov/webapps/pollingplace_search/.

- Make sure you vote at a polling place in your precinct. You have the right to cast a provisional ballot even if you're not sure that you're at the right polling place, but your provisional ballot will not be counted if you vote in the wrong precinct.⁷⁰

What if someone challenges my right to vote?

- If someone challenges your vote simply because you moved to a new address within the same county 30 days or more before the election, you can update your address at the polls and vote. If you moved less than 30 days before the election, you can vote at your old polling place.⁷¹
- For other challenges, the chief judge at the polling place will ask you and your challenger some questions and rule on the challenge.⁷² If the chief judge rules against you, you still have the right to cast a provisional ballot.

What if someone tries to intimidate or harass me?

- Tell a poll worker right away. If the poll worker is the problem, tell a poll watcher, call your county board of elections, or call one of the election hotline numbers listed at the end of this card.

What if I make a mistake on my ballot or the voting machine malfunctions?

- Tell a poll worker before you cast your vote. If you make a mistake on a paper ballot, you have the right to up to three replacement ballots as long as you catch your mistake before you cast your ballot.⁷³

How do I make a complaint?

- First, ask for an election official at your polling place. He or she can handle most routine complaints that arise on Election Day. Candidates, political parties, and nonprofit groups may also have poll watchers at your polling place who might be able to assist you. If any of those people ask you who you voted for, or if they can't resolve your complaint, call your county board of elections or the North Carolina State Board of Elections.⁷⁴
- You can also call one of the election hotline numbers listed at the end of this card.

★ ——— ★ **MORE INFORMATION** ——— ★

- *If you need information about the rules for voting:*
 - Contact the North Carolina State Board of Elections at: (866) 522- 4723 or www.ncsbe.gov. You can also call your county board of elections.
 - You can also call the Election Protection hotline at: 866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683)
- *If you feel your right to vote has been denied:*
 - Contact the ACLU at 919-834-3466 or letmevote@aclu.org.
 - You can also call the US Department of Justice Voting Rights Section at: (800) 253-3931
- *For assistance in Spanish, call 888-VE-Y-VOTA (888-839-8682)*

- 1 No time limit for voting in NC.
- 2 <http://www.ncsbe.gov/ncsbe/> ("Upcoming Events")
- 3 <http://www.ncsbe.gov/ncsbe/absentee-voting-mail>
- 4 <http://www.ncsbe.gov/ncsbe/> ("Upcoming Events")
- 5 <http://www.ncsbe.gov/ncsbe/absentee-voting-mail>
- 6 <http://www.ncsbe.gov/ncsbe/Voting/Absentee-Voting>
- 7 <http://www.ncsbe.gov/ncsbe/Voting/Absentee-Voting>
- 8 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-82.20(h) (voters must apply to register by 25 calendar days before the election in which they intend to vote. For the Nov. 2014 election, this date is Oct. 10).
- 9 N.C.G.S.A. §§ 163-55, 13-1.
- 10 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-57(11).
- 11 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-131.
- 12 42 U.S.C. § 15481(a)(3)(A)-(B).
- 13 42 U.S.C. § 15481(a)(3)(A)-(B).
- 14 N.C.G.S.A. § 13-1.
- 15 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-57(c).
- 16 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-57(c).
- 17 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-55(a).
- 18 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-82.1(c).
- 19 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-82.15 (requiring update only for those who moved 30 or more days before election); <http://www.ncsbe.gov/ncsbe/updates-registration>.
- 20 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-82.15(a).
- 21 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-82.15(a).
- 22 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-82.6(a).
- 23 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-82.6(b).
- 24 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-82.15(a).
- 25 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-82.15(d).
- 26 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-82.15(d).
- 27 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-82.15(e).
- 28 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-82.15(e).
- 29 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-82.16(a).
- 30 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-82.16(a).
- 31 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-82.16(a).
- 32 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-82.16(d).
- 33 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-82.6.
- 34 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-82.6.
- 35 20 days before any election. (8 NCAC 7B.0101.)
- 36 N.C.G.S.A. §§ 163-82.19, N.C.G.S.A. § 163-82.20.
- 37 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-82.6.
- 38 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-226.
- 39 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-227.2(b) (requiring that early ("one-stop") voting begin the second Thursday before the election and end the Saturday before the election at 1 p.m). This provision is challenged in *League of Women Voters v. North Carolina* and in the U.S. Department of Justice's lawsuit over NC election laws, and may be invalidated if the litigation is successful.
- 40 N.C.G.S.A. § 163.227.2(g).
- 41 N.C.G.S.A. § 163.227(g).
- 42 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-226.
- 43 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-231(a)
- 44 N.C.G.S.A. § 263-226.3(a)(4).
- 45 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-230.1(a) (requests must be received by the Tuesday before the election).
- 46 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-231(b)(1).
- 47 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-231(b)(2)(b).
- 59 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-166.3; 42 U.S.C. § 15481(a)(3)(A)-(B).
- 60 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-166.8(a)(2).
- 61 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-166.8(a)(2).
- 62 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-166.7 (North Carolina passed an ID requirement, but it does not go into effect until Jan. 1, 2016).
- 63 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-166.12.
- 64 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-166.12.
- 65 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-166.12.
- 66 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-166.11.
- 67 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-166.11.
- 68 8 NCAC 6B.0105(E).
- 69 Call with Don Wright, General Counsel of NC State Board of Elections.
- 70 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-166.11(5). This provision is being challenged in *League of Women Voters v. North Carolina* and in the U.S. Department of Justice's lawsuit over NC's voting laws, and may be invalidated if the suit is successful.
- 71 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-87.
- 72 N.C.G.S.A. § 163-88.
- 73 8 NCAC 10B.0104.
- 74 8 NCAC 3.0101.