

ELECTION PROTECTION **YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO VOTE**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: MINNESOTA

Special Questions About Primary

- 1. What is the method for selecting party nominees in the state (vote, straw poll, caucus)?**

Presidential party nominees are selected in Minnesota through State political party precinct caucuses. The major political parties conduct preference polls for their presidential candidate at the caucus. The results of the preference voting are reported to the Secretary of State.

More information, including party caucus dates, can be found at <http://www.sos.state.mn.us/home/index.asp?page=886>

- 2. Who is responsible for administering the primary (political parties, boards of elections, etc.)? What differences from a non-primary election does that create (for example, are different polling places used)?**

Each political party is responsible for administering their respective precinct caucuses. The precinct caucuses are held at the regular polling places for each precinct or other suitable places designated in the call for the precinct caucus. Voting is done by secret ballot and reported to the Secretary of State.

You can find your precinct caucus at <http://caucusfinder.sos.state.mn.us/>

More information on Minnesota's political parties can be found at <http://www.sos.state.mn.us/home/index.asp?page=237>

- 3. Who is entitled to vote in the primary? (for example, do you have to be affiliated with the Democratic party to vote in the Democratic party primary, and if so, do you have to be previously registered as a Democrat or can you decide at the polls?)**

Only those individuals who are or will be eligible to vote at the time of the next state general election may vote at the precinct caucus. An eligible voter may vote only in the precinct where the voter resides at the time of the caucus.

Only those persons who are in agreement with the principles of the party as stated in the party's constitution, and who either voted or affiliated with the party at the last state general election or intend to vote or affiliate with the party at the next state general election, may vote at the precinct caucus.

4. Is the election only a presidential primary election or will there be other offices or issues on the ballot? If so, what other offices or issues will be on the ballot?

There may be additional issues for decision at each party's caucus, but those issues are specific to the party. Contact your political party for more information.

<http://www.sos.state.mn.us/home/index.asp?page=237>

Questions Involving Access to the Ballot:

1. It is after 7:00 AM and the polling place is not open.

Contact the county election board. Contact information can be found at

<http://www.sos.state.mn.us/home/index.asp?page=53>

or

http://www.sos.state.mn.us/docs/public_listings_for_county_election_offices.pdf

If the polling place is open at 7:00 a.m. but the voting machines have not arrived, call headquarters immediately. Voters should be permitted to vote by back-up paper ballots.

Note that in towns with fewer than 500 inhabitants located outside the metropolitan area, polls may open as late as 10:00 a.m.

You may need to contact the election judges or the county election board for that county.

2. It is 8:00 PM and my precinct is closed or closing and they will not let me vote.

Contact the county election board. Contact information can be found at

<http://www.sos.state.mn.us/home/index.asp?page=53>

An attorney will contact the county election officials to report the problem. Voters in line or in the process of voting at 8:00 p.m. must be allowed to vote. If you are a Legal Command Center volunteer, contact a Commander.

3. There are equipment problems at my precinct and I cannot vote. What should I do?

Encourage the voter to ask to vote by a back-up paper ballot or by provisional ballot. If a caller reports problems with machines, immediately contact the Electronic Frontier

Foundation representative at the call center to walk you through the appropriate steps to solve the machine problem.

Identification:

1. I do not have any identification with me. Can I vote?

Yes. If the voter is a properly registered voter before election day, and is not a first-time Minnesota voter who registered by mail, the voter is not required to present identification at the polling place but must sign the roster stating that the individual is at least 18 years of age, a citizen of the United States, has resided in Minnesota for 20 days immediately preceding the election, maintains residence at the address shown, is not under a guardianship in which the court order revokes the individual's right to vote, has not been found by a court of law to be legally incompetent to vote or convicted of a felony without having civil rights restored and has not already voted in the election.

However, an election judge *may*, before the applicant signs the roster, ask the voter to confirm the applicant's name, address and date of birth.

A first-time voter who registered by mail is required to present acceptable identification.

2. I am a registered voter who is not on the rolls at my precinct. Can I vote?

Confirm that the voter is a qualified to vote (i.e., meets the age, criminal status and durational residency requirements found on pages 9-10 of the manual) and that the voter registered in time to vote in this election. Next, using the online poll locator tool, make sure the voter is at the correct polling place. See <http://pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us/> or <http://pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us/pollfinderb>

If the voter has registered on time, is eligible and is in the correct polling place, direct the voter to ask the poll worker to call the county auditor and confirm the registration. If the voter still is not on the rolls, let them know that the voter can register to vote at the polling place. See manual at pages 11-12.

3. Poll workers are turning voters away if they don't have photo ID.

Call the Legal Command Center or call the hotline at 866-OUR-VOTE immediately. An attorney will be dispatched to the polling place. Encourage the voter to go back inside the polling place and demand the right to vote (unless the voter is a first time voter who registered to vote by mail, in which case they are required to provide acceptable identification). If you are a Legal Command Center volunteer, contact a Commander.

Where to Vote:

1. Where do I vote (for voters who have not moved)?

You can look up polling locations with the Polling Place Finder at <http://pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us/> or <http://pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us/pollfinderb>

2. I have moved within the same PRECINCT and have not updated my address for voter registration purposes. Where should I vote?

If the voter has moved within the same precinct, the voter should go to the appropriate polling place for that precinct. If the voter registration list still lists the voter's old address, the voter will be asked to update their registration. If the updated address is within the precinct, the voter must be permitted to vote.

3. I have moved to a different precinct within the same COUNTY and I have not updated my address for voter registration purposes. Where should I vote?

The voter should go to new polling location that corresponds to their new address and update the registration by completing a new voter registration application using the new residence address. The voter will be required to present acceptable evidence of proof of her/his new residence address.

4. I have moved from one county to another and have not updated my address for voter registration purposes. Where should I vote?

The voter should go to the new polling place that corresponds to their new address in the voter's NEW COUNTY, and update the registration by completing a new voter registration application using the new residence address. The voter will be required to present acceptable evidence of proof of her/his new residence address.

Assistance at the polls:

1. I am physically disabled and need assistance; will my polling place be accessible?

Minnesota law requires that each polling place be accessible to physically disabled voters. If a voter reports that a polling place is not accessible to the handicapped, call the Legal Command Center or call the hotline at 866-OUR-VOTE immediately so an attorney can get in touch with the responsible election official to report the problem immediately. If you are a Legal Command Center volunteer, contact a Commander.

2. I am blind; physically disabled or cannot read English and require assistance at the polls in order to vote. Can I get assistance at the polls?

A voter requiring assistance at the polls for any of the reasons stated above can take a person of their choice into the voting booth (except employer, an agent of employer, an officer or agent to their union). Election Protection volunteers can serve as assistants to disabled or language minority voters if asked to do so by the voter. If a poll worker refuses to allow a disabled or language minority voter to bring a person of their choice into the voting booth, call the Legal Command Center or call the hotline at 866-OUR-VOTE immediately. If you are a Legal Command Center volunteer, contact a Commander.

Minnesota is not covered by the language minority provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. However, the county board of elections may appoint persons fluent in a non-English language to serve as interpreters to assist voters based on indications of need.

Miscellaneous Issues:

1. I have been approached by candidates or others at the polls.

All candidates and anyone else trying to induce or persuade a voter may not do so within 100 feet of the building in which a polling place is situated, or anywhere on the public property on which a polling place is situated. They can solicit you if they comply with this rule. If they are violating these requirements, contact the Legal Command Center to report the problem, let them know the extent of the problem and work with them to assess if calling an election official is necessary.

2. What if I requested an absentee ballot but I want to vote in person on Election Day?

As long as the voter has NOT already submitted the absentee ballot, and is otherwise qualified, they should be allowed to vote in person.

3. There are people at the polls trying to intimidate voters.

Call the Legal Command Center immediately. An attorney will be dispatched to the polling place. If you are a Legal Command Center volunteer, contact a Commander.

If the voter agrees, put them on hold while you call the Legal Command Center so they can send an attorney to the location immediately. Then, gather as much information from the voter as possible. After hanging up with the caller, call back the Legal Command Center and fill the attorneys there in on the details.

4. I have a felony conviction. Can I vote?

Yes. Minnesota law permits convicted felons to vote so long as they are not currently serving a felony sentence of incarceration and are not on parole or probation for a felony conviction. The right to vote is automatically restored after a person has been fully discharged from her/his sentence.

5. I am a college student, can I vote where I go to school?

College students may register and vote where they go to school provided that they consider that location their voting residence. A voting residence is the residence the student claims as their home; the residence which qualifies them to vote on a particular ballot. Students must be held to the SAME eligibility requirements as any other voter in the jurisdiction. If a student has been turned away at the polls, ascertain if they have fulfilled all of the registration requirements (age, criminal status, durational residency requirements) and that they have registered on time for this election. If so, contact the Legal Command Center to dispatch an attorney to the location and contact the appropriate election official.