

**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?**

Voter registration forms can be downloaded from the Secretary of State's office at [www.sos.state.ga.us/elections/voter\\_registration/voter\\_reg\\_app.htm](http://www.sos.state.ga.us/elections/voter_registration/voter_reg_app.htm). Mail-in registration forms are available from local county board of registrars' or election offices, as well as many public libraries, public assistance offices, recruitment offices, schools and other government offices. Individuals may also request voter registration forms by emailing [sosweb@sos.state.ga.us](mailto:sosweb@sos.state.ga.us) or writing the Office of the Secretary of State, Elections Division, Suite 1104 West Tower, 2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, Atlanta, Georgia 30334-1505. Name and mailing address must be included. Students can obtain Georgia voter registration forms, or the necessary forms to register in any state in the U.S., from their school registrar's office or from the office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

Georgia citizens can also register to vote when receiving services at the Department of Driver's Services. "Motor Voter" registration is offered when renewing or applying for a driver's license.

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

No. The Georgia Voter Registration Application should only be on a form or forms prescribed by the Secretary of State, which include printed forms, forms made available through electronic means, or otherwise. According to officials at the Secretary of State's office, the application may be printed and duplicated as necessary. There are no restrictions on copying a completed voter registration before submission to the registrar.

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

The National Voter Registration Form can be used in Georgia. Voter registration drives using the National Voter Registration Form are subject to the same requirements described in Questions #12-15. If using the National Voter Registration Form in Georgia, the political party affiliation field may be left blank.

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

Yes. The actual registration card will not be open to inspection by the public. Registration records containing the name, address, date of birth, gender and all election districts applicable to each registered voter are maintained by the Secretary of State's office and are available therefrom. The social security numbers and the place at which a voter registered will remain confidential.

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

No. However, the Secretary of State's office advises against applicants using pre-filled registration forms. Any inconsistent information on registration forms, such as an incorrect county or zip code, may delay the registration process.

## **COMPLETING VOTER REGISTRATION FORMS**

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

There is no duration requirement imposed on county residence in Georgia. However, you must be a resident at the time of registration and you must register to vote by the fifth Monday before the election.

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

A person may register to vote using any address he or she considers to be his or her legal residence. The residence of any person shall be held to be in that place in which such person's habitation is fixed, without any present intention of removing therefrom. The registrars taking such registration may consider the applicant's financial independence, business pursuits, employment, income sources, residence for income tax purposes, age, marital status, residence of parents, spouse, and children, if any, leaseholds, sites of personal and real property owned by the applicant, motor vehicle and other personal property registration, and other such factors that the registrars may reasonably deem necessary to determine the qualification of an applicant to vote in a primary or election. Thus, a college campus or dorm address, but not a P.O. Box, may be used when registering to vote.

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

Voters may register where they consider their legal address to be, that is, where they have fixed habitation without any present intention to leave. Students may register in Georgia if they fall under this definition. Those who leave the state for temporary purposes but with the intention of returning may still register to vote at their original address.

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

Voters registering in person are required to provide one of the same forms of identification required to vote. See **Question #10**. First-time voters registering by mail shall provide a copy of proper identification submitted with the application. However, if the voter is a first-time voter who registered by mail and did not include a copy of proper identification with the application, such a voter may provide one of the following forms of non-photo identification and vote by provisional ballot: a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows the name and address of such elector. However, if voting by provisional ballot, in order for your vote to count proper identification must be presented to the county registrar's office within two days from the close of the polls.

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

Yes. Georgia voters must provide identification at the polling place in order to vote. Acceptable forms of identification include the following:

- Georgia voter identification card
- Georgia driver's license
- Valid identification card issued by a branch, department, agency, or entity of the State of Georgia, any other state, or the United States authorized by law to issue personal identification provided that such identification card contains a photograph of the elector.
- Valid United States passport

- Valid employee identification card containing a photograph of the elector and issued by any branch, department, agency, or entity of the United States government, this state, or any county, municipality, board, authority, or other entity of this state
- Valid United States military identification card, provided such identification card contains a photograph of the elector
- Valid tribal identification card containing a photograph of the elector

Voters without valid identification are still permitted to vote by provisional ballot, and their ballot shall be counted if they sign an oath or affirmation attesting that they are the person identified on the voting certificate. If such elector does not have any of the forms of identification listed in this subsection, such elector may vote a provisional ballot pursuant to [Code Section 21-2-418](#) upon swearing or affirming that the elector is the person identified in the elector's voter certificate. Such provisional ballot shall only be counted if the registrars are able to verify a current and valid identification of the elector within two days from the close of the polls.

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

If an applicant fails to provide all of the required information on the application for voter registration with the exception of current and valid identification, the board of registrars shall notify the registrant in writing of the missing information. The board of registrars shall not determine the eligibility of the applicant until and unless all required information is supplied by the applicant. In the event the elector does not respond to the request for the missing information within 30 days, the application shall be rejected.

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

Yes. A person whose name has changed should complete a new registration form indicating the name change. If this is done after the registration deadline, the voter should bring official documentation to verify the name change. It may be necessary to sign an Affirmation of Identity and vote by provisional ballot as there are no express provisions of the Georgia Election Code addressing this issue.

## **REGISTERING OTHERS TO VOTE**

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

County Boards of Registrars may appoint Deputy Registrars to assist in the registration of voters, but appointment as a Deputy Registrar is not required to assist potential voters with registration. Thus, third-party voter registration drives are legal. However, the Secretary of State recommends that a Deputy be present when conducting voter registration drives. Completed registration forms must be submitted within 10 days of the execution of the application.

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

It is illegal to receive, accept, offer, or provide compensation for soliciting persons to register to vote based upon the number of persons registered. Any person who knowingly receives, accepts, offers or provides compensation based on the number of persons registered will be guilty of a misdemeanor.

### **15) Is training required for voter registration drives?**

No. There is no express training requirement under the Georgia Electoral Code or Regulations. However, it is advisable to conduct training for staff of voter registration drives to minimize the number of incorrectly completed applications.

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

There are no residency restrictions for third-party volunteers conducting registration drives. However, Deputy Registrars must be electors of the State and be able to read, write, and speak English. In addition Deputy Registrars must have never been convicted of a felony or of any crime involving fraud or moral turpitude.

## **REGISTRATION DEADLINES**

**17) What is the deadline to register to vote?**

The fifth Monday before the election. This year the deadline is October 6, 2008 for the November 4th Presidential election.

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

No, registrations submitted by mail simply must be postmarked by the same date that in-person registrations are completed. However, the elections division website advises returning completed applications on the next business day.

**19) Is Election Day registration allowed?**

Individuals who register to vote on Election Day will not be permitted to vote in that election.

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

Both early and absentee voting are permitted in Georgia. An absentee voting application may be downloaded from [http://sos.georgia.gov/ELECTIONS/elections/voter\\_information/absentee.htm](http://sos.georgia.gov/ELECTIONS/elections/voter_information/absentee.htm). In order to be counted, ballots must be received by mail no later than the close of polls on Election Day.

An elector who requests an absentee ballot by mail or who, during the period of Monday through Friday of the week immediately preceding the date of a primary, election, or run-off primary or election, casts an absentee ballot in person at the registrar's office or absentee ballot clerk's office shall not be required to provide a reason in order to cast an absentee ballot in such primary, election, or run-off primary or election.

Voters casting an absentee ballot in person must present one of the permitted forms of identification and fill out an absentee ballot application when arriving to vote.

Early voting is permitted the Monday through Friday before the election, but locations and times are determined by each county's Board of Registrars. At the advance voting office, you must fill out an application and provide one of the [permitted forms of identification](#). You will then be issued a ballot that must be filled out and cast while you are in the office.

Please note that you cannot vote on the day immediately preceding the Tuesday election. Traditional polling places will be open on Election Day. However, if you choose to advance vote you cannot cast another ballot at your precinct on Election Day.

## **VOTER REGISTRATION LEGISLATION**

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

HB 43 (House Second Readers)

HB 205 (House Second Readers)

**22) What applicable statutes are possibly affected?**

- Title 21, chapter 2 of the Official Code of Georgia.
  - §21-2-216: Qualification of Electors
  - §21-2-220: Application for registration; identification requirement
  - §21-2-224: Registration Deadlines

**23) Are there any helpful elections official contacts?**

For more information, contact the Georgia State Board of Elections at:  
Georgia Office of the Secretary of State, Elections Division  
Suite 1104 West Tower  
2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, S.E.  
Atlanta, Georgia 30334  
(404) 656-2871

**24) What web resources are available?**

The Georgia Secretary of State has a website dedicated to providing information on the voter registration process: [www.sos.ga.gov/Elections](http://www.sos.ga.gov/Elections). This site includes resources such as frequently asked questions, absentee ballots, and special provisions for military officers.

The National Campaign for Fair Elections is another resource:  
<http://www.nationalcampaignforfairelections.org/pages/georgia>.