

**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?**

There are several ways to register to vote in Louisiana and to obtain the necessary forms. Applicants can download the form from the Secretary of State's website: <http://www.sos.louisiana.gov/tabid/457/Default.aspx> and send the form in by mail (faxing the form is not permitted). Applications are also available at the local voter registration office, or state agencies such as the DMV, food stamps office, supplemental food assistance for Women, Infants, and Children, Family Independence Temporary Assistance, all offices which offer assistance to persons with disabilities, and recruitment offices for the armed services.

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

The form used to register voters must be the form prescribed by the Secretary of State or be functionally equivalent to the form the office distributes. While the Louisiana election code does not address copying registrations after they have been filled out, the Secretary of State's office has prohibited copying due to privacy concerns.

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

The National Voter Registration Form may be used in Louisiana.

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

Louisiana law provides that, pursuant to the written request of 25 parish residents, the parish commissioner must open up voter registration information for inspection and copying during office hours. Only early voting applications are exempted from this requirement. However, voter social security numbers, birth dates, drivers license number, mother's maiden name and information identifying certain law enforcement officers or those registered under the Department of State's Confidentiality program may not be disclosed.

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

Louisiana places no restrictions on pre-filled registration forms. However, in general, pre-filled registration forms are not recommended, as any incorrect information included on the card will slow the registration process.

## **COMPLETING VOTER REGISTRATION FORMS**

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

A person may register to vote immediately after establishing an address in the parish where they wish to vote.

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

Louisiana law provides for registration using a college campus or dorm address. However, anyone using a P.O. Box as a mailing address must also list a physical address and description.

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

Yes. While they may not register to vote in both locations, any bona fide, full-time students attending an institution of higher learning in Louisiana may register to vote in the district where they reside while attending school or, alternatively, they may register in the district of their permanent address. In the case of full-time students, the intention to remain indefinitely is waived.

For the purposes of voter registration, a resident is anyone who lives in the parish, municipality, or precinct where he registers to vote, with the intention to reside there indefinitely. To vote absentee, a student must send a ballot request to the voting registrar by mail. Included on the application must be the voters full name and signature, the signature of two witnesses, the voter's date of birth, the maiden name of the voter's mother, the election for which the ballot is being requested, the reason the absentee ballot is being requested, and the address to which the ballot. If the voter uses a PO Box as their mailing address, the voter's physical address must also be listed. Absentee ballot requests will be accepted up until four days prior to the election. If a voter signs an affidavit waiving their right to a secret ballot, absentee ballots maybe faxed to a voter's home or place of business.

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

Voters must produce a driver's license or a Louisiana special identification card. If the registrant does not have a driver's license or special identification card, the last four digits of the registrants social security number may be used. If the voter does not possess a social security number may attach a copy of a current photo identification of a utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows the name and address of the applicant to the registration.

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

Yes. Louisiana code provides that voters must identify themselves and produce a Louisiana driver's license or equivalent form of ID. It is also possible to vote without a picture ID provided the voter has a utility bill, payroll document or government document with their name and address on it if the voter signs an affidavit of identification. Doing so, however, may make the vote susceptible to a challenge.

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

Voter registration is confirmed by using the registrants Louisiana driver's license, special ID card number, or the last four digits of his/her social security number. If the information provided matches the information maintained by the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections or the Social Security Administration the voter is added to the voter roll. If the match is not made, the voter is

notified and given ten days to send in the corrected information. Should the updated information be incomplete or incorrect, the voter will again have ten days to appear before the registrar. Once the applicant appears in person and can prove their identity, it will be added to the official list of voters.

When there is illegible information, the applicant will have ten days to mail in the corrected information. If the applicant fails to do so he or she will not be added to the rolls of registered voters and will be ineligible to vote in the election cycle.

**12) If a person changes their name, can they have their new name reflected on their voter registration records by filling out a voter registration form?**

A voter who has changed his or her name in court must file either a copy of the judgment resulting in the name change or an affidavit setting forth the details of the judgment with the registrar or someone certified to process voter applications.

Married, widowed and divorced women may be registered by their maiden name, their husband's name or a hyphenated combination.

However, Louisiana code also provides that changing one's name on a driver's license or notifying the Department of Public Safety and Corrections of the change shall serve as notice that the voter is changing his/her information for voting purposes.

## **REGISTERING OTHERS TO VOTE**

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

Failure of a third party to submit to the parish registrar of voters a completed registration application collected through a registration drive within thirty days of receipt of the completed application from the applicant. Violation of the statute allows for a fine up to \$1000 and up to a year in prison.

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

Louisiana law does not prohibit the submission of voter registration forms by individuals receiving compensation. It is, however, illegal to pay a voter to register or to in any way compensate a voter for their registration.

**15) Is training or registration with state required for registration drives?**

Louisiana election code does not specifically address this question. However, according to the Secretary of State's office, there is no training or registration required for volunteers registering voters. However, Parish Registrars conduct registration and poll watching trainings during each election cycle, and the Secretary of State's office strongly recommends for volunteers who wish to register voters in Louisiana.

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

No.

## **REGISTRATION DEADLINES**

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

For 2008, the deadline to register to vote in the presidential election is Monday, October 6<sup>th</sup> – thirty days prior to Election Day on Tuesday, November 4<sup>th</sup>.

Any registration received or postmarked later than Monday, October 6<sup>th</sup> 2008 will not be added to the official voter rolls until the day following the presidential election.

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

Voter registration forms collected by a third party must be submitted to the parish registrar within 30 days of their receipt. Failure to submit registration forms may result in a fine of up to \$1,000 and a prison sentence of up to one year.

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

Those who register on Election Day will not be allowed to vote in that election. The deadline to vote in the 2008 Presidential election is November, October 6, 2008.

**19) Does state election law allow for early voting?**

Louisiana provides for early voting from fourteen to seven days before an election. Any registered voter may vote early by going to the registrar of voters' office during business hours, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday - Friday.

**VOTER REGISTRATION LEGISLATION**

**20) Is there any pending legislation? If so, where is it in the legislative process?**

No

**21) Applicable statutes?**

No

**21) Is there an elections official contact who is helpful?**

More information may be obtained from the Louisiana Secretary of States office. They are available on the web at : (<http://www.sos.louisiana.gov/tabid/464/Default.aspx>) and by phone at (225) 922-0900.

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

Louisiana Secretary of State:  
<http://www.sos.louisiana.gov/Home.aspx>

National Campaign for Fair Elections:  
[www.nationalcampaignforfairelections.org/pages/louisiana](http://www.nationalcampaignforfairelections.org/pages/louisiana)