

**1-866-OUR-VOTE
(1-866-687-8683)****Disclaimer:**

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VOTER REGISTRATION FORMS**1) Where can voter registration forms be obtained?**

There are several ways to get a voter registration form. The form can be downloaded from the State Board of Elections website at http://www.elections.state.md.us/pdf/2007_English_InternetVRA.pdf. Application forms are also available at the following locations: local and state election boards; Department of Health and Mental Hygiene; Department of Social Services; Motor Vehicle Administration; Offices on Aging; MTA Paratransit Certification Office; all public institutions of higher education; recruitment offices of the U.S. Armed Forces; marriage license offices; and offices for students with disabilities at all Maryland colleges and universities.

The Department of Motor Vehicles must provide voter registration forms and change-of-address forms to the local driver's license examination facilities for any applicant who wishes to register to vote when applying for the issuance, renewal, or replacement of a driver's license. Maryland residents and military personnel living overseas can obtain Maryland voter registration forms at the website listed above or access the Federal Post Card application at <http://www.fvap.gov/pubs/onlinefpcapdf>.

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

Yes. The registration application is produced exclusively by the State Board. However, Maryland law only requires that the signature on the form be original, and the Secretary of State provides the form online for self-printing, indicating that photocopied forms are accepted. See http://www.elections.state.md.us/voter_registration/index.html#fax. While organizations are allowed to photocopy completed voter registration forms, state statute prohibits copying or recording applicants' personal ID numbers including driver's licenses, state ID card numbers, and any portion of Social Security numbers. Some organizations have complained about the administrative burden created by the requirement to blacken out individual ID numbers before photocopying.

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

No. Election officials are required to accept the National Voter Registration Form. In addition, non-residents may use the National Voter Registration Form to register to vote in their home states. This form is accessible at <http://www.eac.gov/voter/Register%20to%20Vote>.

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

Yes. While voter registration records are available for public inspection and may be shared with jury commissioners/clerks or other government agencies, the law prohibits use of voter registration records for commercial solicitation purposes. In addition, the public is barred from accessing personal ID numbers and information about the location at which the voter registered.

- 5) Are there restrictions regarding pre-filling information on registration forms?**
No. The Maryland Election Code does not address pre-filling information.

COMPLETING VOTER REGISTRATION FORMS

- 6) How long must you live in a county before you are eligible to register to vote?**
A person must have been a resident of the Maryland county in which the person intends to register as of the day of registration.

- 7) Are there any restrictions on registering to vote using a P.O. Box, college campus, or dorm address?**
Yes, P.O. Box numbers may not be used for voter registration purposes.

A person may register to vote using any address of residence, which requires domicile that is permanent and official, although it may be different from the place at which the person is actually living on a short-term or temporary basis. Domicile may be "unconventional," as long as it is fixed, in order to allow those who live at out-of-door locations to vote.

Relevant factors in this determination include: the address used for tax returns or other government documents, driver's license, bank accounts, charge accounts, and for insurance purposes. College students may use a college address for the purposes of voter registration if they consider this address to be permanent and official. http://www.elections.state.md.us/voter_registration/students.html.

- 8) If I enter or leave the state because of work or school, can I register to vote?**
Applicants may register in Maryland if they consider their domicile to be in the state, meaning their "official" or "permanent" home. Thus, those who enter or leave the state may register to vote in Maryland so long as they declare legal residence there. College students may use a college address for the purposes of voter registration if they consider this address to be permanent and official. If the student does not plan to return to his or her parent's address after graduation, for example, and intends to remain at the Maryland college address after graduation, the student can use this college address for the purposes of voter registration. http://www.elections.state.md.us/voter_registration/students.html/

- 9) Are there any identification requirements to register to vote?**
Yes. Federal law requires that the person provide a Maryland driver's license or MVA ID Card number, or, in the alternative, the last four digits of his/her social security number, unless that person states under penalty of perjury that he/she possesses none of these documents.
http://www.elections.state.md.us/voter_registration/index.html#Eligibility.

- 10) Are there any identification requirements in order to vote?**
Yes, the voter must give his/her name and date of birth to the election judge, who will then compare it with the precinct register. The applicant is not, however, required to show a voter registration card or any other type of identification. The voter may still cast a provisional ballot, even if the voter's name and birth date do not appear on the precinct list.

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

Where an application contains a legible name and address, the board reports that it will return the application to the voter with a request for additional information. The application will be considered filed on the date it was originally received, but will be listed as "pending" in the voter registration database.

The voter then has two options: If he/she returns the application with the requested additional information or corrections prior to the election, then the voter will be registered and will be allowed to cast a ballot in the current election.

If the voter cannot or does not supply the requested information prior to the election, he/she can bring the requested documents to the polling place, along with a valid ID or a current bill that shows name and address. The voter will cast a provisional ballot. Once the additional information is processed, the ballot will be counted in the current election because the registration process began within the normal registration period.

Absentee voters can complete registration by including a copy of one of the requested documents with an absentee ballot. http://www.elections.state.md.us/voter_registration/index.html#fax.

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

Yes. A person already registered to vote under a name that has been legally changed since originally registering may have the name changed at the Motor Vehicle Administration or by notifying the local election board of the county in which he/she is registered. The notice may be made in writing and may be delivered by mail or in person. Change of name or address can also be undertaken at the polling place with a voter authority card or another appropriate form that shows the new information. MD Code, Election Law, § 3-304.

REGISTERING OTHERS TO VOTE

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

Both individuals and groups can conduct third-party registration efforts. Organizations and individuals wishing to conduct voter registration efforts must be approved by the state or local board after completion of a training program. Once approved, the organization can then train its own members and organization employees. The organization members do not have to be separately trained/approved by the board. Individuals can also volunteer in their own capacity once they have completed the board's training and been approved.

All third-party registration volunteers/staff must be over 18 years of age and are allowed to distribute voter registration applications, assist people with completing voter registration applications, and return completed applications to the county election office. Volunteers are also required to inform the voter that she/he can either return the registration him/herself or have the volunteer complete this task.

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

Yes, depending on the form of compensation. Voter registration volunteers are prohibited from receiving per registrant compensation for their work.

15) Is training required for voter registration drives?

Yes, volunteers must be certified by the State or local board and are required to complete a short training session. **See Question 13.**

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

No, but individual volunteers, or the organization training group volunteers, must be approved by the State or local board. **See Question 13.**

REGISTRATION DEADLINES

17) What is the deadline to register to vote?

The voter registration deadline for the 2008 general election is October 14, 2008. The application must be submitted or postmarked on or before this date. Voting registration will then close from October 15, 2008-November 17, 2008. The voter may still submit an application during this period, but it will be held by the local board and processed when registration reopens. Registration will then be valid for the next election. If there is sufficient evidence that the application was actually postmarked or submitted prior to October 14, 2008, then the voter will be permitted to vote in the 2008 general election.

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

No.

19) Is Election Day registration allowed?

Individuals who register to vote on Election Day will generally not be permitted to vote in that election, only in subsequent elections. For the registration deadline, **see Question 17 and 18.**

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

Early voting is not permitted in Maryland, however, absentee voting is permitted.

An application for an absentee ballot, signed by the voter, may be made in person, by mail on a form provided by the local board or under federal law, or by written request including the voter's name and address, and the address to which the ballot is to be mailed.

A qualified applicant may designate an authorized agent to pick up and deliver an absentee ballot. If an agent is designated by more than one voter, the agent must show authorization for each individual voter. This agent must meet the following qualifications: (i) must be at least 18 years old;(ii) may not be a candidate on that ballot; (iii) must be designated in a writing signed by the voter under penalty of perjury; and (iv) must execute an affidavit under penalty of perjury that the ballot was delivered to the voter who submitted the application, marked and placed in the envelope by the voter or with assistance in the agent's presence, and returned to the local board of elections by the agent. No more than one absentee ballot will be issued to a voter, unless the election director reasonably believes that the ballot previously issued to the voter has been lost, destroyed, or spoiled.

Applications for an absentee ballot for the November 4, 2008 election must be received no later than Tuesday, October 28, 2008.

VOTER REGISTRATION LEGISLATION

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

No.

22) What applicable statutes are possibly affected?

Maryland's Election Code is codified in the Election Law Title of the Maryland Code.

23) Are there any helpful elections official contacts?

For more information, contact the Maryland State Board of Elections at:

151 West Street,
Suite 200
Annapolis, MD 21401
800-222-8683

24) What web resources are available?

The Maryland State Board of Elections has a website dedicated to providing information on the voter registration process, http://www.elections.state.md.us/voter_registration/index.html#When.

The National Campaign for Fair Elections is also a helpful resource:

<http://www.nationalcampaignforfairelections.org/pages/maryland>.