

**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 get a voter registration form. Via the Internet, the form can be downloaded at: [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/MIVoterRegistration\\_97046\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/MIVoterRegistration_97046_7.pdf). Original copies can be obtained by visiting a branch office of the Secretary of State, or any county, city, or township clerk's office, or requesting an application by mail.

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

No. Michigan law does not ban individuals or groups from copying blank voter registration forms for use in voter registration drives, and the downloadable form can be used for these purposes. There are also no restrictions on copying completed voter registration forms prior to submission.

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

No. Either the National Mail Voter Registration or the Michigan Voter Registration form can be used to register a person to vote in Michigan. National Forms that are printed on regular paper, signed by the applicant, and mailed in an envelope with first class postage are accepted.

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

No. Michigan has no restrictions on the use of registration form information.

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

No. Michigan law does not have any restrictions regarding pre-filling information on registration forms. Any inconsistent information on registration forms, such as an incorrect county or zip code, may delay the registration process. See Question #11.

**COMPLETING VOTER REGISTRATION FORMS****6) How long must you live in a city or township before you are eligible to register to vote?**

A person who has been a resident of the city or township for at least 30 days prior to the election is eligible to register to vote. You cannot change any address information for voter registration purposes after this date. If you move within the state 60 days or less before an election, you can vote at your last place of registration (your old address).

**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 residence. See Question #8. A college or dorm address may be used if the applicant lives at that address. A post office box is not a residence, but may be used as a mailbox for delivery of the registration form. Students with a campus P.O. Box should fill in their dorm name and room number in the "Address where you live" line on the Michigan form or the "Home Address" box (2) on the National form. They should enter their P.O. Box number in the "Mailing Address" line on the Michigan form or "Address Where You Get Your Mail" box (3) on the National form.

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

Yes. A person's voting address is determined based on their residence. A residence is any place where a person habitually sleeps, keeps his or her personal effects and has a regular place of lodging. A person can reside at an address and leave for a period of time, e.g. to attend college or join the military. If a person has more than 1 residence, or a residence separate from that of a spouse, then the place where the person resides *for the greater portion of the time* is considered his or her official residence.

Students who want to vote are protected by the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. This means that they cannot be treated differently than any other citizen when it comes to voting. Specifically, students should neither be forced to fill out additional information that non-students do not have to fill out nor can election officials require students to fulfill additional obligations that non-students do not have to satisfy. Of course, no one can register and vote in two places. If a student considers his or her dorm or school address to be their current residence, he or she can register to vote there. Otherwise, the student can register to vote by absentee ballot at his or her permanent address (where the student's parent(s)/legal guardian resides).

A person is eligible to register and vote in the county they consider their residence. If a person is away from their residence, they may vote by absentee ballot.

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

No. There are currently no identification requirements to register to vote, unless a voter is voting in Michigan for the first time, in which case federal requirements apply. First time voters must submit a copy of current and valid photo identification or a copy of a paycheck stub, utility bill, bank statement, or government document that lists their name and current address.

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

Yes. First time voters will need to bring a current and valid form of photo identification, or will need to sign an affidavit saying they do not have photo ID. Returning voters do not have to bring identification to vote; however, a valid driver's license may be helpful at the polls.

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

The clerk will send a voter identification card to the voter's address. If it is returned as undeliverable, the clerk will send a duplicate. If that is returned, the clerk will assume the voter has moved. If the change form is received or postmarked at least 30 days before an election, the applicant will be able to vote in that election. If there is a problem with the voter registration form, but the person who filled it out shows up to the polls with a validated voter registration application receipt and the clerk determines the person is qualified to vote, that person will be allowed to vote.

**I2) Can a person register to change their name by filling out a voter registration form?**

Yes. A person who goes to a secretary of state branch office can apply to register to vote and change their voter registration name at the same time.

## **REGISTERING OTHERS TO VOTE**

**I3) What are the laws regarding people who will receive compensation for registering others to vote?**

There are currently no laws limiting voter registration by people receiving compensation.

**I4) Are there any laws regarding submission of voter registration forms by individuals receiving compensation?**

No. Michigan currently has no laws regarding how voter registration forms must be submitted by individuals receiving compensation.

**I5) Is training or registration with state required for registration drives?**

No. Michigan currently does not require any training or registration for registration drives.

**I6) Are volunteers or staff of voter registration drives required to be county or state residents?**

No. Michigan has no requirements for people assisting with voter registration drives.

## **REGISTRATION DEADLINES**

**I7) What is the deadline to register to vote?**

October 6 is the deadline to register to vote for the November 4, 2008 elections.

Michigan has a 30-day voter registration requirement. Registration forms must be completed, signed, and received by the 30th day before the election. An individual can still be registered to vote if: (1) the application is received through the mail on or before the 7th day after the close of registration; and (2) the postmark is missing or is unclear, and the applicant has given a date on the application that is on or before the close of registration.

**I8) Must organizations or individuals engaged in voter registration drives submit their forms within a certain period of time?**

No, there are no unique deadlines for third parties. The deadline is the same for registration and submission.

### 19) Can I register to vote on Election Day?

Individuals who register to vote on Election Day will not be able to vote in that election. Michigan has a 30-day voter registration requirement and all applications must be received no later than the 30th day before the first election in which the individual would like to vote.

### 20) Does Michigan election law allow for early voting?

A person may vote absentee for any one of the following reasons:

1. Because of physical disability such person is unable to vote without assistance at the polls.
2. Religious beliefs
3. Role as election official in another precinct
4. In jail awaiting arraignment or trial
5. Unable to vote without assistance at the polls
6. 60 years of age or older
7. Is or expects to be outside the township/city where he or she resides (including absence due to enrollment at a university, college or other higher education institute).
8. The voter has moved to Michigan between 6 months and 30 days before the election, is not qualified to vote at his or her previous residence anymore, and can provide proof of that. This person may apply to vote absentee *in person* until 2:00 p.m. on the Saturday immediately prior to the election.
9. The voter has moved away from Michigan, was registered to vote in Michigan, cannot vote in his or her new residence yet, and can provide proof of that. This person may apply to vote absentee *in person* until 2:00 p.m. on the Saturday immediately prior to the election.

Voters may apply to vote absentee between 75 days and 2:00 p.m. the Saturday before an election. Voters may apply to vote absentee by mail or at the clerk of the township, city, or village where the voter is registered. A person qualified to vote as an absent voter may apply in person at the clerk's office before 4:00 p.m. on the day before the election (except a Sunday or holiday).

If an emergency, such as a sudden illness or family death prevents you from reaching the polls on Election Day, you may request an emergency absent voter ballot. Requests for an emergency ballot must be submitted after the deadline for regular absent voter ballots has passed but before 4:00 p.m. on Election Day. The emergency must have occurred at a time which made it impossible for you to apply for a regular absent voter ballot. Your local clerk will have more information about emergency absent voter ballots.

To obtain an absentee ballot by mail, you must apply in writing. Your form must be submitted to the clerk of the city or township in which your voting residence is located. You can view a complete list of clerks, searchable by county, here: <https://services2.sos.state.mi.us/mivote/clerksearch.aspx>.

For more information visit: [http://www.michigan.gov/sos/0,1607,7-127-1633\\_11976\\_11987-28039--00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/sos/0,1607,7-127-1633_11976_11987-28039--00.html).

To download an absentee ballot application, visit:

[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/AbsentVoterBallot\\_105377\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/AbsentVoterBallot_105377_7.pdf) (or in Spanish here: [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/AV\\_Ballot\\_App\\_Spanish\\_165232\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/AV_Ballot_App_Spanish_165232_7.pdf)).

After receiving your absent voter ballot, you have until 8:00 p.m. on Election Day to complete the ballot and return it to the clerk's office. Your ballot will not be counted unless your return envelope is signed, and that signature matches your signature on file. If you received assistance voting the ballot, then the signature of the person who helped you must *also* be on the return envelope. Only you, a family member or person residing in your household, a mail carrier, or an election official is authorized to deliver your signed absent voter ballot to your clerk's office.

## **VOTER REGISTRATION LEGISLATION**

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

Michigan's photo ID requirements, M.C.L. § 168.523, is now in effect.

### **22) Applicable statutes?**

Chapter 168 of the Michigan Compiled Laws is relevant to Voter Registration, specifically §§168.491 to 168.530.

### **23) Is there an elections official who I can contact for help?**

For more information, contact the Bureau of Elections at:

Michigan Department of State  
Bureau of Elections  
PO Box 20126  
Lansing, MI 48901-0726  
Phone: (517) 373-2540  
Fax: (517) 241-4785

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

Are you registered to vote? You can check your registration status here:

<https://services2.sos.state.mi.us/mivote/votersearch.aspx>.

National Campaign for Fair Elections:

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