

**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. The form can be downloaded from the Elections Division website at <http://www.sos.state.or.us/elections/votreg/sel500.pdf>. Application forms are also generally available at any County Elections office (<http://www.sos.state.or.us/elections/other.info/clerk.htm> for your local office), the Secretary of State's office, some state agencies such as the Department of Motor Vehicles, and voter registration drives. The Department of Motor Vehicles must provide voter registration forms and change-of-address forms to any person who wishes to register to vote when applying for the issuance, renewal, or replacement of a driver's license.

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

Yes. A person may not make a copy of or provide to another person a copy of an individual's signature submitted for purposes of registering to vote. Any person may apply in writing to the Secretary of State for permission to print, copy or otherwise prepare and distribute the registration cards designed by the Secretary of State.

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

The National Voter Registration Form can be used in Oregon. Voter registration drives using the National Voter Registration Form are subject to the same requirements described in **Questions #13-16**. If using the National Voter Registration form in Oregon, the race/ethnicity fields should be left blank. You must indicate your party affiliation if you wish to take part in that party's primary election.

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

Yes. The actual registration card will not be open to public inspection. However, any person can request the list of registered voters prior to 45 days before a primary, general, or special election. No person to whom a list of registered voters is made available or supplied shall use any information in the list for commercial purposes. In limited circumstances, a person can request the county clerk to keep his or her residence address from disclosure as a public record. A county clerk must grant a request for an exemption from disclosure if the resident registering to vote demonstrates that his or her personal safety or the safety of any family member residing with him or her is in danger if the address remains available for public inspection.

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

No. If a registration card accurately and legibly contains the registrant's name, residence address, date of birth and signature, the person will be registered.

## **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 permanent resident of the Oregon county in which the person intends to register for a minimum of twenty-one (21) days prior to a primary or general election.

A permanent residence is any place in which habitation is fixed and to which, when the person is absent, the person intends to return. An elections official may consider the following factors in determining residency of a person for voter registration purposes:

- Where the person receives personal mail;
- Where the person is licensed to drive;
- Where the person registers motor vehicles for personal use;
- Where any immediate family members of the person reside;
- The address from which the person pays for utility services; and
- The address from which the person files any federal or state income tax returns.

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

Yes. A person may register to vote using any address he or she considers to be his or her legal residence. Because a P.O. Box is not a fixed habitation, it does not establish the place of a person's permanent residency.

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

Use of any physical address, including a college address, is permissible provided that you consider that address to be your legal residence. (See Question 6 for information regarding residency.)

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

Yes. New laws require that people must provide identifying information to register to vote. If you have a current, valid Oregon Driver's License/ID, you must provide that number. If you do not have a current, valid Oregon Driver's License/ID, you must provide the last four digits of your Social Security number.

If you do not have a current, valid Oregon Driver's License/ID or a Social Security number, you must affirm this on the voter registration card, and if you are registering by mail, you must provide a copy of one of the following:

- Valid photo identification;
- A paycheck stub;
- A utility bill;
- A bank statement;
- A government document;
- proof of eligibility under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) or the Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act (VAEH).

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

No. Oregon conducts a vote by mail ballot process. Once a person receives a ballot in the mail, that person can either return the ballot by mail or drop it off at any County Elections office or designated drop site. To find the location of the nearest drop site, you may call 1-866-ORE-VOTES.

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

If a filled out registration card legibly and accurately contains the registrant's name, residence address, date of birth and signature, the person will be registered. If a registration card is missing a date of birth, contains an incomplete date of birth, or misprints a date of birth, registration occurs on the date that registration would have occurred had the date of birth been represented correctly. If any of the required information is missing, the county clerk will attempt to contact you to complete the registration. If the registration card omits a political party affiliation, that person will be unaffiliated.

**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 vote once in the county in which the person is registered under the former name. Following the election, that person's registration will become inactive, at which point the person must update his or her registration.

## **REGISTERING OTHERS TO VOTE**

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

Any person may distribute a registration card in any reasonable manner that facilitates registration. However, a person cannot use "undue influence" to induce a person to register to vote or to vote in a certain manner. Undue influence is generally defined as giving something of value away to induce someone to register to vote, to vote in a certain way, or to vote at all.

Also, if a person helping out in a voter registration drive receives a completed registration card, that person must forward it to a county clerk or the Secretary of State no later than the fifth calendar day after receiving the card.

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

Yes. A person may not receive pay based on the number of signed voter registration cards he or she collects.

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

No. There is no express training requirement under Oregon law. On the Oregon Elections Division's website, there are, however, summary guidelines whose purpose is to ensure that voter registration drives comply with election laws.

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

No, they are not.

## **REGISTRATION DEADLINES**

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

For the 2008 general election, the deadline is Tuesday, October 14, 2008. Oregon requires voters to be registered or postmark the registration cards at least 21 calendar days before an election. All applications to vote must be submitted or postmarked no later than the 21st day before the date of the first election in which the individual intends to vote. .

Since Oregon conducts its elections entirely by mail, the last day a ballot can be sent out to a voter is 14 days before the general election, or Tuesday, October 21, 2008.

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

Yes. Organizations or individuals engaged in voter registration drives must submit completed applications to a county clerk or the Secretary of State no later than the fifth calendar day after receiving the card.

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

Individuals who register to vote on Election Day will not be permitted to vote in that election. However, if you claim to have registered, but evidence of your registration is missing, you will be allowed to vote by completing a registration form and casting a provisional ballot. Your vote will not be counted until the county clerk verifies that you were properly registered.

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

Since Oregon conducts all its elections by mail, “early voting” is permitted in the sense that a voter can return the ballot by mail earlier than Election Day, provided that the ballot is received by 8 p.m. on Election Day.

In Oregon’s election by mail system, an absentee ballot is defined as a person who is sent a ballot prior to the regular mailing of ballots. Eligible voters may vote by absentee ballot by filling out an absentee ballot form *after* already registering and returning the form to their county clerk’s office by mail or in person. You may request an absentee ballot by visiting <http://www.oregonvotes.org/forms/sel111.pdf>.

If the person foresees a short-term absence on Election Day, that person can request an absentee ballot from the county clerk and will be sent a ballot 29 days in advance or starting October 6, 2008.

By contrast, a long term absentee voter will be sent a ballot no later than the 45th day before the election or September 20, 2008.

A “long term absentee voter” is a resident of Oregon both absent from the place of residence and:

- (1) serving in the Armed Force of the United States or who has been discharged from the Armed Forces of the United States for not more than 30 days;
- (2) serving in the Merchant Marine of the United States or who has been discharged from the Merchant Marine for not more than 30 days; or
- (3) temporarily living outside the territorial limits of the United States and the District of Columbia.

The difference between a short-term and long-term absentee voter is primarily the date the ballot will be sent to that person. Unless you qualify as a long-term absentee voter, you are generally a short-term absentee voter.

## **VOTER REGISTRATION LEGISLATION**

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

We are unaware of any pending legislation.

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

If you would like to read the statutes that generally apply to voter registration, they are under Title 23, chapters 246, 247, 253, and 254, of Oregon's Revised Statutes, specifically:

- Chapter 246 on elections generally;
- Chapter 247 on qualification and registration of voters;
- Chapter 253 on absentee voting; and
- Chapter 254 on conducting elections.

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

For more information, contact the Oregon Elections Division at:  
Oregon Elections Division  
255 Capitol St NE, Ste 501  
Salem OR 97310  
(503) 986-1518

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

The Oregon Elections Division has a website dedicated to providing information on the voter registration process: [www.oregonvotes.org](http://www.oregonvotes.org). This site includes resources such as frequently asked questions and information on the vote by mail system and absentee ballots.

The National Campaign for Fair Elections is another resource:  
[www.nationalcampaignforfairelections.org/pages/oregon](http://www.nationalcampaignforfairelections.org/pages/oregon).