

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

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

You can register to vote in a number of ways. Washington offers online voter registration for individuals to register to vote or transfer a registration to a new address. You must have a valid Washington state driver's license or state identification card to use online voter registration. Online voter registration is available at www.vote.wa.gov. You may also download or request a paper voter registration form at www.vote.wa.gov and mail in the completed form. The online voter registration system and paper voter registration form gather the same information.

Mail-in voter registration forms are widely available at schools, public libraries, and the state elections office. Certain state agencies also provide voter registration services. Additionally, a person may register to vote when he or she applies for or renews a driver's license or state identification card.

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

Yes. Individuals must submit completed, original voter registration forms. However, they may make copies of their voter registration forms for their personal records. This requirement to submit original registration forms also applies to organizers of voter registration drives (see **"Registering Others To Vote"** below).

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

The National Mail Voter Registration Form may be used in Washington. If using the National Mail Voter Registration Form, Washington residents may leave the "Choice of Party" and "Race or Ethnic Group" fields blank.

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

Yes. The original voter registration form cannot be inspected or copied by the public. However, generally a voter's name, address, political jurisdiction, gender, date of birth, voting record, date of registration, and registration number – which are contained in voter registration records or files – is available to the public. No other information from voter registration records or files is available to the public.

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

No. Individuals simply must provide all the required information accurately in order for their voter registrations to be considered complete.

COMPLETING VOTER REGISTRATION FORMS

6) How long must a person live in a county before becoming eligible to register to vote?

Generally, you are eligible to register to vote if you have lived in a county for at least thirty days before an election.

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

Yes. A person must register to vote using an address that establishes the person's residence in the state. A person's residence for the purpose of registering and voting means the permanent address where the person physically resides and maintains his or her abode. Therefore, a person registering to vote must provide an address that confirms where the person resides, but he or she may separately provide a P.O. Box for mail delivery purposes. A person may use a college campus or dorm address to register to vote only if it is the person's residence as defined above.

8) If I am in the state because of work or school, can I register to vote?

Yes. A person may register to vote using a college address only if it is the person's residence, meaning the permanent address where the person physically resides and maintains his or her abode. If a person does not intend to establish permanent residence with a college address, then that address cannot be used. Moreover, if a person is claimed as a dependent for income tax purposes, then the person probably will have the same residence as the claiming parent(s) for voter registration purposes.

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

Yes. To register to vote, an individual must provide a Washington state driver's license number or Washington state identification card number, or a Social Security number if the individual does not have a Washington state driver's license or state identification card. If an individual does not have a driver's license, state identification card, or Social Security number, the individual will have his or registration processed and be issued a unique voter registration number. However, the registration will be flagged as incomplete and the individual will have to provide some other valid form of identification (such as a photo ID, current bank statement or government document), before or at the time of voting, for the ballot to be counted.

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

Yes. In addition to the identification requirements to register to vote (**see question 9 above**), an individual must provide identification before signing in at a polling place. An individual can provide either:

- Photo identification such as a driver's license or state identification card, student identification card, or tribal identification card;
- A voter identification card issued by a county elections officer; or,
- A copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, or government check or other government document.

Any individual who cannot provide such identification must vote with a provisional ballot.

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

If an individual does not provide all the required information on a registration form (or it is illegible), the individual will receive a verification notice from the county auditor and must respond to the notice within forty-five days with the required information. If the individual does not respond, he or she will not be registered to vote.

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

A person who has changed names since registering may still vote if the person notifies the county auditor regarding the name change. A person may notify the auditor by sending a signed notice, completing a new registration application with the name change, or signing a change-of-name notice in person before the auditor or a registration assistant. A person may also sign a change-of-name notice at the voter's polling place on the day of an election.

REGISTERING OTHERS TO VOTE

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

Any person or organization conducting third-party registrations must transmit voter registration forms to the secretary of state or county auditor at least once weekly. The registration date on these transmitted forms will be the date they are received by the secretary of state or county auditor. Completed forms can be mailed or submitted in person to the local elections office or secretary of state's office. There are guidelines regarding voter registration drives on the Washington's secretary of state website at the following address:

<http://www.secstate.wa.gov/elections/pdf/VRGuidelineswebpdf.pdf>.

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

No. There are no express provisions of the Washington code on elections prohibiting the submission of voter registration forms by individuals receiving compensation.

15) Is training required for voter registration drives?

Training is not required, but persons or organizations planning voter registration drives should know how to complete voter registrations so they can assist individuals. They should also be aware of registration deadlines and know who is eligible to register to vote. For more tips for a successful drive, see Washington's voter registration guidelines at

<http://www.secstate.wa.gov/elections/pdf/VRGuidelineswebpdf.pdf>.

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

No, they are not required to be county or state residents.

REGISTRATION DEADLINES

17) What is the deadline to register to vote?

Washington requires voters to be registered thirty days before an election. For the November 4, 2008 general election, the deadline to register to vote is Saturday, October 4, 2008.

For mail-in registrations, the postmark date is the date that must meet the registration deadline. However, if the postmark date is illegible, the registration will be considered to have arrived on time if it arrives within five days of the registration deadline.

There is also a special procedure for individuals not registered in Washington who wish to register after the thirty-day registration deadline. Under this special procedure, the person must register in person with the county auditor, county or other designated place by the fifteenth day before the election. The person will then be able to vote by absentee ballot. For the November 4, 2008 general election, the deadline for this late registration special procedure is Monday, October 20, 2008.

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

Any person or organization conducting third-party registrations must transmit voter registration forms to the secretary of state or county auditor at least once weekly.

19) Is Election Day registration allowed?

Individuals who register to vote on Election Day will not be able to vote in that election. Voters must register thirty days before an election to vote in that election.

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

Washington does not permit early voting, but it does permit absentee voting. Any registered voter may vote by absentee ballot. Generally, a registered voter may request an absentee ballot any time from ninety days before an election up to and including the day before an election. Any registered voter may also apply to be an ongoing absentee voter.

VOTER REGISTRATION LEGISLATION

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

There is no pending legislation affecting voter registration at this time, as the Washington legislature's 2008 regular session ended in March. The key recent legislative development in Washington is the introduction of online registration, which became available in January 2008.

22) What applicable statutes are possibly affected?

Washington's voter registration statutes can be found under Title 29A of the Revised Code of Washington. Specifically, refer to the following chapters:

- § 29A.04 for general provisions;
- § 29A.08 on voters and registration;
- § 29A.40 on absentee voting; and,
- § 29A.44 on polling place elections and poll workers.

23) Are there any helpful elections official contacts?

Yes. For more information about voter registration, you can contact Washington's Elections Division at:

Web: www.vote.wa.gov

Email: elections@secstate.wa.gov

Telephone: 1-800-448-4881 toll-free Voter Information Hotline
1-800-422-8683 TDD/TTY
(360) 902-4180

Mail: PO Box 40229
Olympia, WA 98504-0229

Location: Washington Secretary of State
520 Union Avenue SE
Olympia

You can also contact your local county auditor/elections department. For that contact information, refer to <http://www.secstate.wa.gov/elections/auditors.aspx>.

24) What web resources are available?

Washington's secretary of state website, located at www.vote.wa.gov, has various resources to help you learn more about voter registration. Washington's new online voter registration is available here, as well as downloadable paper registration forms.

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