

MINNESOTA

FAQ Cheat Sheet

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This nonpartisan FAQ was created for the Election Protection Coalition. If you have any questions that are not answered below or need any clarifying information, please call 866-OUR-VOTE.

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Overview of General Election

Important Dates

Date/Period	Event or Deadline	Notes
September 18	Early Voting by Absentee Ballot begins	You can vote in person at your county election office. In addition to your county election office, some cities and towns offer in-person absentee voting. Check with your city clerk's office for more information.
October 2	Absentee Ballot Request Recommended Deadline	MN SOS recommends but does not require voters to request their AB by this date
November 3	Absentee Ballot Receipt Deadline	NEW: MUST BE <u>RECEIVED</u> BY 3pm on ELECTION DAY! <u>Postmarks do not count!</u>
November 3	Election Day	Polls Open: 7am-8pm

Quick Links

- How to register to vote: <https://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/register-to-vote/>
- Check your voter registration: <https://mnvotes.sos.state.mn.us/VoterStatus.aspx>
- Absentee ballot application:
<https://mnvotes.sos.state.mn.us/ABRegistration/ABRegistrationStep1.aspx>
- Find your polling place: <https://pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us/>
- List of local election offices:
<https://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/find-county-election-office/>
- Track your absentee ballot: <https://mnvotes.sos.state.mn.us/AbsenteeBallotStatus.aspx>



Combating Misinformation

Ballot Harvesting

Quick Response: We value every eligible citizens' right to make their voice heard, including those who might need extra help to vote by mail. Everyone should make a plan to vote and if they need help or have questions, call 866-OUR-VOTE.

Balance Messaging: Partisan special interests working to attack the integrity of our democracy are using fear to target communities who may need extra help to vote by mail, including senior citizens and Americans living with disabilities. As Americans, we value every eligible citizens' right to make their voice heard, regardless of who they are or where they live. As election rules and processes have changed because of the COVID-19 pandemic, everyone should make a plan to vote now and if they need help or have questions, call 866-OUR-VOTE.

Law Enforcement at the Polls

Quick Response: Every eligible voter has the right to vote safely in person without fear and intimidation. If you or someone you know experiences voter intimidation during this election, call the nonpartisan Election Protection hotline at 866-OUR-VOTE.

Balance Messaging: President Trump is claiming he can send law enforcement to polling places. This is a clear effort to scare voters, particularly voters of color, who want to vote in person. To be clear, there are constitutional limits on President Trump's power to use law enforcement in this way and he has no legal authority over local law enforcement. Federal and state laws prohibit anyone - including politicians and members of law enforcement - from intimidating voters, targeting voters based on race or other characteristics, or intentionally blocking eligible citizens from voting. We will not let President Trump or any other partisan politician intimidate us. Our country is based on free and fair elections and any attempt to undermine the people's right to vote is undemocratic. Every eligible voter has the right to vote safely in person without fear and intimidation. For those who chose not to vote in person, voting by mail is a secure and safe alternative. If you or someone you know experiences voter intimidation during this election, call the nonpartisan Election Protection hotline at 866-OUR-VOTE.

Vote-By-Mail Isn't Safe

Quick Response: The truth is, voting by mail is a tried and tested process that is safe and secure. Voters have several secure options to cast their ballot, whether it is by mail, in person, or at a dropbox. **In Minnesota over 130,000 voters living in townships of 400 or less residents, have already been voting by mail for some time now. That's 1,000 precincts using vote-by-mail as their only way of voting - it's safe and it works!.**



Balance messaging: Partisan special interests are trying to stop people from voting by mail and breed distrust in our election systems by spreading confusion about when ballots will arrive in the mail. The truth is, voting by mail is a tried and tested process that is safe and secure. Voters also have options to cast their ballot, whether it is by mail, in person, or at a dropbox. Voters should check with their local election official for rules and options in Minnesota. The Postal Service can handle the mail-in balloting volume, but voters should be aware of their options.

Election Night is Not Results Night

Quick Response: In a democracy every vote counts. This year's election will have more mail-in ballots because of the coronavirus pandemic, and counting them all accurately, safely, and securely will mean we probably won't have final results on November 3.

Balance messaging: Partisan special interests who are working to stop voters, especially voters of color, from making their voice heard are saying only votes counted on Election Day matter. That's not true - in a democracy every vote counts. This year's election will have more mail-in ballots because of the coronavirus pandemic, and counting them all accurately, safely, and securely will mean we probably won't have final results on November 3. Elections aren't certified on election night and every state has different rules with checks and balances on how to count ballots. Find the rules for Minnesota and how you can receive and submit your mail-in ballot at www.nass.org/can-i-vote

Frequently Asked Questions

Absentee Ballots

Who can vote early by absentee ballot?

Any eligible voter can vote early by absentee ballot. You do not need to be registered to vote to request an absentee ballot.

How do I get an absentee ballot?

To request an absentee ballot, use the online absentee application, or one of downloadable applications. Return your completed absentee application to your county election office by mail, fax or email.

- [Online absentee application](#)
- Downloadable absentee applications:
 - [English Absentee Application](#)
 - [English Large Print Absentee Application](#)



For those living in an assisted living facility, nursing home, residential treatment center, group home, battered women's shelter, or be hospitalized (or unable to go to a polling place due to health reasons or disability), **you may have someone to pick up and return your absentee ballot.** That person must be at least 18 years old, must have a pre-existing relationship with you, and cannot be a candidate.

- [Request for Agent Delivery of Absentee Ballot Form](#)

What are the deadlines to request an absentee ballot?

There is no stated deadline to request an absentee ballot, but the MN SOS has recommended voters request by October 2, 2020 to avoid any delays or disruptions in mail services.

How do I use my absentee ballot?

Read the instructions that come with your ballot. There is no witness requirement for registered voters because of COVID-19. Non-registered voters will still need a witness, and your signature envelope will have a box for a witness to complete and sign. Mail back as soon as possible.

What are the deadlines to return an absentee ballot by mail? (REVISED)

Your absentee ballot must be **RECEIVED by** November 3, 2020 at 3:00pm (Election Day). **POSTMARKS DO NOT COUNT.** You can check for local dropboxes by going to your County Elections Office website.

What are the ways I can return my absentee ballot?

During absentee early voting you may drop your ballot off at your county clerk's office. On Election Day, you may return your ballot in person to the election office that sent your ballot. **You may not drop off your absentee ballot at your polling place on election day.**

Can someone else return my ballot for me?

Yes. And you can return ballots for up to three other voters. You'll need to show ID with a name and signature when returning a ballot for someone else. They must be turned in no later than Nov. 3rd by 3:00 pm CST. The person who is returning the ballot for you has a limit of 3 ballots they can deliver on behalf of someone else so make sure they have not reached their limit.

What if I never received my absentee ballot?

If your ballot gets damaged, lost or if you never received your ballot, you can get a replacement ballot in person or by mail. The election official will cancel your original ballot. Do not return your original ballot, even if you eventually find or receive it. Only return your replacement ballot. It must be returned by 3:00pm on Nov. 3rd to be counted. You can also vote on Election Day if you are concerned you won't have time to request your replacement ballot and return it by 3:00pm on Nov. 3rd.

What if I changed my mind about voting absentee?

As long as your absentee ballot hasn't been counted yet, you may still cast a ballot in person at your polling place on Election Day or at your local early voting location. You can track the status of your absentee ballot to see when it is sent to you and when it is received by election officials:

<https://mnvotes.sos.state.mn.us/AbsenteeBallotStatus.aspx>.

After voting in person, the unique ballot ID number on your original absentee ballot will be invalidated, so that if it is returned to the election office the officials will not count it. **If you plan on voting in person, please do not bring your absentee ballot with you.**

If you have received an absentee ballot but are unsure if it will arrive at your election office in time to be counted, you may also consider contacting your local election official to see what options you have for locations and times to drop off your absentee ballot.

How do I check the status of my absentee ballot?

You can check the status of your absentee ballot at:

<https://mnvotes.sos.state.mn.us/AbsenteeBallotStatus.aspx>

What if there is a problem with my mail ballot? Can I fix it?

If you did not fill out the signature envelope correctly, election officials will mail you replacement materials, including an explanation for why your signature envelope was rejected. But if there are fewer than five days before Election Day, election officials will try to contact you. In this case, you can vote in person at your local election office or at your polling place on Election Day.

If you made a mistake when filling out your ballot, you can ask the election office that sent your ballot for a replacement ballot. If there is not enough time to get a new ballot, completely cross out the name of the candidate you accidentally marked. Then mark the candidate you prefer. Do not initial your corrections.

Polling Place Questions & Registration

Where can I vote? Am I at the right place?

You can use the polling place finder to make sure you're in the right place to vote:

<https://pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us/>. You must vote at your assigned polling place. It is usually located near where you live. Most polling places are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Can I vote early in person?

Yes, you can vote early in person. You can cast an absentee ballot at your local elections office starting September 18 (46 days before Election Day.) Visit www.mnvotes.org for hours and locations.

Am I registered to vote? Can I register for this election if I'm not?

- Check your voter registration: <https://mnvotes.sos.state.mn.us/VoterStatus.aspx>
- You can register by paper (mail or fax), online, or in person. There is no voter registration deadline in Minnesota. How to register to vote:
<https://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/register-to-vote/>
- Register to vote online:
<https://mnvotes.sos.state.mn.us/VoterRegistration/VoterRegistrationMain.aspx>

You can register to vote at the polls on election day, also known as Same-Day Registration. To register and vote, you must show proof of your current address by bringing proof via one of these two methods.

1. ID with current name and address
 - Valid MN driver's license, learner's permit, or ID (or a receipt for any of these)
 - Tribal ID with name address, photo, and signature
2. Photo ID **AND** a document with your current name and address
 - **Approved Photo IDs** - choose one, may be expired
 - ✓ DL, state ID, or learner's permit from **any** state
 - ✓ US passport
 - ✓ US military or veteran ID
 - ✓ Tribal ID with name, signature, and photo
 - ✓ MN university, college, or technical school ID
 - ✓ MN high school ID
 - **Approved Documents** - choose one, may be shown on an electronic device
 - ✓ Bill, account, or start of service statement for:
 - Phone, TV, or internet
 - Solid waste, sewer, eclectic, gas, or water
 - Banking or credit card
 - Rent or mortgage
 - ✓ Lease or rental agreement
 - ✓ Current student fee statement
 - [Other methods to prove your residency can be found here.](#)

What if I've moved?

First check your polling place online at <https://pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us/>. If you've moved to:

- **Same Precinct, Same County:** Vote at your regular polling place.



- **Different Precinct, Same County:** Update your registration at your new polling place. See [“Am I registered to vote? Can I register for this election if I’m not?”](#) for instructions. You will be required to show proof of residence with a photo ID.
- **Different county:** Update your registration at your new polling place. See [“Am I registered to vote? Can I register for this election if I’m not?”](#) for instructions. You will be required to show proof of residence with a photo ID.

If you’re moving from another state, you must live in Minnesota for at least 20 days before Election Day.

What if I’m not on the voter roll at my polling place?

First check that you’re at the correct polling place online at <https://pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us/>. If your registration is out of date, you can update your registration at your new polling place. See [“Am I registered to vote? Can I register for this election if I’m not?”](#) for instructions. You will be required to show proof of residence with a photo ID.

When should I request or use a provisional ballot?

There are no provisional ballots in Minnesota.

Voter ID

Do I need an ID to vote in person?

In Minnesota you are not required to show a government issued Photo ID when you go to vote at the polling place. If you are already registered, **you do not need to show ID when you sign in at the polling places**. If you are not registered and would like to register and vote in person at your polling place see [“Am I registered to vote? Can I register for this election if I’m not?”](#).

Disability and Language Access

Is there curbside voting?

Yes. If you cannot easily leave your vehicle to enter the polling place, you can ask to have a ballot brought out to you. Two election judges from different political parties will bring out a ballot to your vehicle. You can also register or update your registration from your car. When you are finished voting, the election judges will bring your ballot inside for you and put it in the ballot box.

Will the polling place be accessible? How do I get accessible voting equipment?

State and federal laws require polling places to be physically accessible. Cities and towns typically choose polling place locations and are responsible for polling place accessibility.

Most polling places have a machine that can mark a ballot for you. It gives you privacy if you cannot (or choose not) to vote using a pen. The machine has a screen that displays the ballot in large print or with a high-contrast background. It can also read the ballot to you through headphones. You can fill out your ballot using a Braille keypad, touchscreen or sip-and-puff device. After you make your choices, the machine prints your completed ballot. You have a right to a replacement ballot if you make a mistake.

Can someone help me vote?

You can bring anyone to assist you while you vote or you can get assistance from election judges. You cannot get assistance from your employer or your union. Your assistant can help you with every part of the voting process. Assistants cannot influence how you vote or mark the ballot for you if you cannot tell them who you want to vote for.

Can someone translate the ballot for me? Will there be ballots in other languages?

Minnesota law is currently not clear on the requirements for providing ballots and materials in other languages. You can bring anyone to assist you to translate your ballot. The same rules apply for language assistance as disability assistance. <https://www.yourvoteyourvoicemn.org/language-barriers>

Other Voting Laws

Can I vote if I have been convicted of a felony?

If you've been convicted of a felony, you can vote when you have finished **all parts of your sentence**, including probation, parole, or supervised release for a felony conviction. Read more about when you can vote if you have a felony conviction:

<https://www.sos.state.mn.us/media/3957/voting-with-a-criminal-record-2020.pdf>

What kinds of electioneering is not permitted? What is the boundary line?

Only authorized people are allowed inside a polling place during voting hours, such as voters and their children, poll workers and someone assisting a voter. Electioneering is not permitted within 100 feet of the building. If the polling place is on public property, no one can campaign anywhere on the property, even beyond 100 feet. However, the prohibition of signs and campaign materials within 100 feet does not apply to adjacent private property.



In the polling place, you cannot display campaign t-shirts or buttons of candidates, official political parties, or ballot questions on the ballot. You will need to either cover up or remove these items while in the polling place.

Is there anything I can't or shouldn't bring with me into the voting booth?

You have the right to take a sample ballot into the voting booth. In the polling place, you cannot display literature of candidates, official political parties, or ballot questions on the ballot.

There is no law that strictly prohibits taking photos or videos in the polling place to record your own voting experience. However, the Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State discourages this for privacy of other voters. But you cannot show your marked ballot to others by taking photographs or video of your own marked ballot.

My vote has been challenged. What do I do?

Who can challenge your eligibility?

Only election judges, eligible voters from the same precinct as you, and appointed challengers can challenge your right to vote. Poll watchers are not authorized by Minnesota and they cannot challenge your eligibility to vote inside a polling place.

What can the challenger do?

The only thing a challenger can do is to contest your eligibility to vote, if and only if they have personal knowledge of your ineligibility. Suspicion is not a basis for making a challenge. The challenger must personally know that a **specific** person is not eligible to vote for a **specific** reason. Challengers cannot speak to you, and they can only speak with the election judge. Their challenge must be made in writing. To read more about what a challenger can and cannot do, visit:

<https://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/election-day-voting/rules-for-challengers/>

What should happen next?

The election judge will ask you to swear to fully and truthfully answer all questions related to your eligibility. Then the judge will ask you questions to determine whether you are eligible to vote. After you answer the judge's questions and they determine that you are not ineligible, you may need to take an oath and sign a voter certificate. You then should be able to vote normally. If you refuse to answer the election judge's questions or refuse to sign the voter certificate, you will be denied your vote.

Do I need a mask to vote in person?

[Gov. Tim Walz's Executive Order 20-81](#) requires that masks be worn in public places, including polling places. The Secretary of State's Office has provided counties with posters informing voters of this requirement. No voter will be denied the right to vote for failure to wear a mask. [Learn more about what the MN SOS is doing to keep voters safe.](#)