



FAQs: Voting in 2020

Worried about voting in-person during the pandemic? Unsure if you can vote by mail? Check out the questions and answers below to learn how, when, and where to vote in 2020! We will continue to update this page leading up to the election, and always check with your [local elections office](#) for the most updated and accurate elections info.

What do I need to know about the 2020 elections?

The 2020 General Election is on November 3. Voters will help choose elected officials and decide on policy changes in their state, usually called “ballot measures.” Depending on where you live and if you are eligible, you can vote for the next President of the United States, as well as Senators and local officials. In many states, you can vote remotely and avoid voting in-person during the pandemic. State deadlines for requesting your absentee ballot range from October 13 to November 2. But, if you will vote by mail, request your ballot today to make sure your ballot arrives on time to be counted!

What are “absentee voting” and “vote-by-mail”?

Absentee voting refers to voting by mail when you cannot reach your designated polling site to vote in person on Election Day. Registered voters apply and request an absentee ballot, usually selecting a reason why they cannot vote in person on Election Day. “Vote-by-mail” is a remote, mail-in voting option that any registered voter within that state can use. Regardless of the state, voters with disabilities are always eligible to vote by mail. In many states, voters with disabilities can sign up to receive mail-in ballots every election.

Is voting by mail secure?

Yes. Despite many claims, there is no evidence of significant fraud due to vote by mail. Measures have been put into place in order to help prevent that. Signatures on the ballot are examined and matched to the one voters used when registering and in some states witnesses are required. Ballots that are mailed can be tracked with a barcode, and those that are hand-delivered are accepted by secure government offices.

Does my state have mail-in voting?

All states have an “absentee” paper ballot that voters can complete and mail remotely if they qualify. **In every state, voters with a disability qualify to vote absentee by mail.** Every state, except for Louisiana, Indiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Texas, will allow voters to vote by mail or vote absentee by selecting COVID-19 or illness as a reason in the 2020 general election.

Will the Post Office deliver my ballot on-time?

The [Postal Service has warned](#) that there could be delays in the delivery of ballots during the election, and [recent changes](#) to the postal office have added to the delivery delays already caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. During normal circumstances mail delivery through the post office usually [takes 2-9 days](#), but [COVID-19](#) and [recent changes](#) to the United States Postal Service has delayed deliveries more. To make sure that your ballot arrives on time, start the voting process as soon as possible if you are voting by mail.

When should I vote by mail?

Start the voting process as early as possible! Voting fully by mail requires multiple deliveries back and forth between you and your elections office, and the Post Office is facing delivery delays due to [COVID-19](#) and [recent organizational changes](#). Request your ballot today to give your local elections office enough time to receive your application, mail your ballot to

you, and receive your completed ballot. If you are voting by mail, request your ballot now, *and check your [local elections office](#) for application deadlines.*

How do I fill out and return my mail in ballot?

- 1. Request your ballot early.** Unless your state automatically mails ballots to all registered voters, you will need to submit an absentee ballot application online, by mail, in person, or possibly fax, phone, or email, depending on your state's options. Deadlines for requesting an absentee or mail in ballot range from October 13 to the day before the election. *Check with your [local elections office](#) to find out the deadline, and apply early to give plenty of time for your ballot to arrive by mail.*
- 2. Complete your ballot.** Absentee ballots are sent by mail as a paper ballot and can usually be completed with assistance. If you have a print disability and need to use a screen reader or another assistive device, many states (find a complete list at the end of this webpage) can send you a ballot electronically that you can complete on a computer. In most cases you must still print, sign, and return a paper ballot. *Check with your [local elections office](#) to find your state's options for accessible electronic ballot delivery and receiving assistance with a ballot.*
- 3. Sign or mark your ballot.** Absentee ballots generally require the signature of the voter and sometimes a witness or two as well. Usually voters can mark a ballot rather than signing it as long as someone else signs the ballot and completes an affidavit as someone assisting the voter. *Check with your [local elections office](#) for your state's instructions for signing or receiving assistance with a ballot.*
- 4. Return your ballot early.** Each state and sometimes county has different options for voters to return their mail ballots, such as mail, in-person delivery, or drop boxes. If you start the process early and request your ballot as soon as possible, you should be able to return your ballot well before the deadline. *It is extremely important to check your [local elections office](#) for how and when to return your ballot.*

- 5. Track your ballot.** Many states allow voters to track their ballot online and make sure it arrives and gets counted by your local elections office. *Check with your [local elections office](#) for more information.*

How can I avoid crowds if I vote in-person?

- 1. Vote Early** - Voting in person before election day helps you avoid crowds and long-lines and also reduces the crowds that will gather to vote on election day. Many states offer in person early voting at polling locations with actual voting machines. Some states that don't allow early voting will allow you to complete an absentee ballot in-person at your local elections office. *Find out if and when you can vote early in your state at [vote.org](#) or check with your [local elections office](#).*
- 2. Vote from Your Car** - In many states, if a polling site is physically inaccessible to you, you can request that two polling site workers bring you a ballot to the curbside. This is called "curbside voting" and is often used to vote from a vehicle.

Can I get help with filling out my ballot?

Yes! Because of the [Voting Rights Act](#), any voter with a disability or inability to write can choose someone, other than their boss or union agent, to assist them with voting. Some states may require the voters with disabilities to let their local elected officials know they will have someone assisting them before they go and vote in-person. When receiving help with a vote-by-mail or absentee ballot, some states require the helper to sign a statement on the ballot or envelope to say that they helped the voter. Some states may say that help cannot come from an employee or candidate or must come from family. Contact your [local elections office](#) to learn about your state's rules.

Can I vote if I have a disability?

Yes! People with disabilities who are at least 18 years old have the right to vote. Your vote matters and is protected by laws to ensure voting is accessible, independent, and private. In some states, a judge can issue a court order that restricts a person's voting rights if they have a guardian, and in Kentucky, some people with intellectual or developmental disabilities may not be allowed to vote. Additionally, some states restrict the voting rights of people who are or have been incarcerated. Contact your local [Protection and Advocacy agency](#) for help understanding or restoring your vote. For more information on laws affecting the right to vote, check out the following resources:

- [Guardianship and Voting Laws](#)
- [Guardianship and Voting Laws by State](#)
- [Guardianship and Voting Laws by State \(Simplified\)](#)
- [Incarceration and Voting Rights](#)

What if I cannot vote with a traditional paper ballot?

All polling sites are required to have accessible voting machines. If you are voting by mail, most states allow voters with disabilities to request an electronically delivered accessible ballot that you can receive and mark digitally before printing and returning it like other mail-in ballots.

Where can I find voting information in ASL, plain language, and screen-reader friendly formats, or any other disability-specific voting information?

Here are some resources from disability organizations on voting in different formats:

- [Voting Information Videos in ASL](#)
- [ASL Hotline](#): 301-818-VOTE (301-818-8683)
- [Resources for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Voters](#)
- [Resources for Blind and Low Vision Voters](#)

- [Voting Information for Blind and Low Vision Voters](#)
- [Easy Read and Plain Language Voting Resources](#)

What if I'm having trouble voting?

If you are facing any accessibility barriers when registering or voting, or if you have any questions, you can call your local Protection and Advocacy organization or "P&A." You can contact your local P&A by visiting the [National Disability Rights Network Website](#) and choosing your state. You can also call the [Election Protection Hotline](#) at 866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683).

How can I get involved in voting advocacy in the disability community?

Interested in joining or starting a REV UP coalition to help get out the disability vote and engage elected officials on the issues important to you? Fill out this [REV UP Intake Form](#) to let us know and we will reach out to you!

Where can I find more info about how to vote?

- **Resources from the Disability Community**
 - [Voting Checklist](#)
 - [Voting Information Videos in ASL](#)
 - [Resources for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Voters](#)
 - [Resources for Blind and Low Vision Voters](#)
 - [Easy Read and Plain Language Voting Resources](#)
 - [Incarceration and Voting Rights](#)
 - [Help with Getting a Voter ID](#)
 - [Help with Getting a Printed Absentee Ballot Application](#)
 - [ASL Hotline: 301-818-VOTE \(301-818-8683\)](#)
 - [Election Protection Hotline: 866-OUR-VOTE \(866-687-8683\)](#)
- **General Voting Information by State**
 - [Vote.org](#)
 - [HeadCount](#)
- **Your Local Election Office**

Enter your state or territory at [usa.gov](https://www.usa.gov) to find your local elections office for accurate information on how and when to vote. The National Federation of the Blind has also listed the links to each state's elections office website on their [Voting Resources webpage](#).

- **Voter ID Laws**

- Check your state's [elections office website](#) for requirements for IDs that voters need to bring or mail a copy of to vote.
- Visit [VoteRiders](#) for help getting an ID.

- **States Electronic Ballot Delivery**

States with an electronic ballot delivery for voters with disabilities include Alaska, California, Colorado, Delaware, D.C., Florida (some counties), Hawaii, Louisiana (must apply for disability program), Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Utah (Utah County), Vermont, Virginia, Washington (some counties), West Virginia. Illinois, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Kentucky are also in the process of making electronic ballot delivery available to voters with disabilities starting in this 2020 election.