



HOW TO VOTE IN VIRGINIA

A Quick Guide for People with Disabilities Voting in the 2023 Statewide Election on or Before November 7, 2023

Note: There are lots of different words and phrases used in voting and elections. We explain some of these words and phrases in this guide. Other definitions and examples can be found in our [Voting Language Resource](#).

There are also phrases that might change based on where you live. For example, in this guide, we use the term "local election office." In some cities and towns, this office might have a different name. Your local election office might be called the county clerk, county election commission, board of elections, or something else. You can find that information by clicking on the links for each state that we have included in the guide.



REGISTERING TO VOTE

• How can I register to vote?

- You can find out if you are already registered by visiting vote411.org.
- Register to vote online at Virginia's [online voter registration website](#).
- Register to vote by downloading, filling out, and returning the Virginia [voter registration form](#).

- **When do I need to register?** Be sure to register to vote on or before October 16, 2023. You may also register in person at the local election office through Election Day.
- **Do I need an identification (ID) to register?** You will need to have a state address and a Social Security number to register to vote.
- **Can I vote if I have a disability?** Yes! People with disabilities who are 18 years old or older have the right to vote. Your vote matters and is protected by laws to make sure voting is accessible, independent, and private.
- **Can I vote if I have a guardian?** In this state, most people with guardians cannot vote. However, you can go to a judge to try to get your right to vote back. If you have done this already, your guardianship order will say that you can still vote. If your guardianship order doesn't say anything about voting, that means you cannot vote. For help understanding your right to vote and guardianship, contact the local [Protection and Advocacy Agency \(P&A\)](#).
- **Can I vote if I have gone to jail or prison?** If you have gone to jail or prison, you should check to see if you are allowed to vote. Some states take away your right to vote if you have gone to jail or prison. Learn about voting rights for people who have [gone to jail or prison](#). You can also learn more from the [Campaign Legal Center](#) or [contact the local P&A](#).



LEARNING ABOUT THE ISSUES

- **What is a ballot?** A ballot is a list of who and what you are voting for. Your ballot will list candidates who are running for different offices, such as School Board members, City Council members, or State Representatives. You vote by marking your choice on the ballot. If you are voting by marking a paper ballot, and not using a voting machine,

make sure to look at both sides of the ballot. Sometimes, your ballot has choices on both sides.

- **What is a ballot measure?** Sometimes, your ballot will have ballot measures. A ballot measure is a law, issue, or question that you can vote on. Voters get to decide if they agree or disagree with the ballot measure by voting yes to agree or no to disagree. [Learn about ballot measures](#) on our resource page.
- **Can I look at my ballot before I go to vote?** Enter your home address in [Ballotpedia's Sample Ballot Lookup](#). This tool will give you a "sample ballot," which will show you what will be on your ballot when you vote.



VOTING IN PERSON

- **Where do I need to go to vote?** The place where you go to vote in person is called a polling place. You can find your local polling place through the Virginia Department of Elections website. [Find your polling place.](#)
- **Do I need an ID to vote in person?** This state asks voters to show an ID to vote in person. If you don't have an ID, you can sign an affidavit to vote. An affidavit is a written statement. When someone signs an affidavit, they promise that they are telling the truth. [Learn about voter ID.](#)
- **What if I need help with filling out my ballot?** You are allowed to have someone help you fill out your ballot.
- **Who can help me with filling out my ballot?** You may choose someone you know to help you vote or ask for help from a poll worker at the polling place. Your boss cannot help you vote. If you are part of a labor union at work, the person who helps you vote cannot be your labor union representative. [Learn about labor unions](#) on our resource page.
- **Can I vote before Election Day?** This state allows any voter to vote in person before Election Day during the Early Voting period. You can vote

between September 22 and November 4, 2023 and avoid lines on Election Day!

- **Can I vote outside of the polling place if it is inaccessible?** This state allows voters to vote outside the polling place if it is inaccessible. This is called curbside voting. Contact the [local election office](#) for more information about curbside voting.



VOTING BY MAIL

- **Can I vote by mail?** Any voter in this state can vote by mail. This is called absentee voting. (If a polling place is not accessible to people with disabilities, this is another way for you to vote.)
- **Do I need an ID to vote by absentee ballot?** No, you do not need an ID when voting by absentee ballot unless you are voting for the first time in a federal election in Virginia. Federal elections happen in even-numbered years. [Learn about federal elections](#) on our resource page.
- **How do I request an absentee ballot?** You must request an absentee ballot online or through the local election office by mail, fax, or email. [Request your ballot.](#)
- **Can I get an electronic absentee ballot?** This state allows some voters with disabilities to request an electronic absentee ballot. They must be blind, have low vision, have a physical disability, or have a learning disability that makes it difficult to read or mark a paper ballot. They can fill out the ballot electronically, print it, and return the ballot. [Request an electronic ballot.](#)
- **What is the deadline for requesting my ballot?** The last day to request an absentee ballot online or by mail is October 27, 2023. The last day to request an absentee ballot at the local election office is November 7, 2023. Request your ballot as soon as possible to make sure that you receive your ballot on time.

- **What if I need help with filling out my ballot?** Follow the instructions on the envelope to sign your envelope when asked. You are allowed to have someone help you fill out your ballot. You must ask for help on the absentee ballot application. The person who helps you may need to complete a form called an affidavit to be returned with the ballot. An affidavit is a written statement. When someone signs an affidavit, they promise that they are telling the truth.
- **Do I need to sign my ballot envelope?** Follow the instructions on the envelope to sign your envelope when asked. Your ballot will not be counted if your signature is missing. The signature on your absentee ballot envelope must match the signature on your voter registration form. You must also have a witness sign your ballot envelope when asked.
- **How do I return my ballot?** You can return your ballot by mail or deliver it to the local election office or a drop box. If you are returning your ballot by mail, it must be postmarked by November 7, 2023, and received by 12 p.m. (noon) on November 10, 2023. If you are delivering your ballot, it must be received by 7 p.m. on November 7, 2023.
- **Can someone return my ballot for me?** You may choose to have someone mail your ballot or deliver it to a drop box. Only the voter can deliver their ballot to the local election office.
- **Can I track my ballot?** Yes, you can track your ballot online to see if the local election office has received it. You can do this on the Virginia Department of Elections website. [Track your ballot.](#)



MORE VOTING HELP

- **Where can I find more information on how to vote?** Check out the [Virginia Department of Elections website](#). Learn about [voting assistance for voters with disabilities](#).

- **What if I am having trouble voting or registering to vote?** If you have any trouble voting, [contact the local P&A](#). If you need help, the phone number is 1-800-552-3962.
- **What if I have more questions?** Check out these resources:
 - [America Votes: Local Election Office Directory](#)
 - [Guardianship and Voting Laws](#)
 - [Resources for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Voters](#)
 - [Resources for Blind and Low Vision Voters](#)
 - [Easy Read and Plain Language Voting Resources](#)
 - [Campaign Legal Center: Restore Your Vote](#)
 - [VoteRiders: Voter ID Help](#)
 - [ASL Hotline](#): 301-818-VOTE (301-818-8683)
 - Please note: the ASL Hotline is only available for November 2023 Elections
 - [Election Protection Hotline](#): 866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683)



The 2023 State Voting Guides for Disabled Voters are made by the REV UP Voting Campaign at the American Association of People with Disabilities. This project was led by Sarah Blahovec. A plain language review was done by Hannah Brecher, Plain Language Consultant and Self-Advocate; Latisha Martin, Plain Language Consultant and Self-Advocate; Liz Weintraub, Senior Advocacy Specialist, Association of University Centers on Disabilities.