

## Voter Registration in North Carolina

**A complete guide to registering and  
educating North Carolina voters.**

**Democracy North Carolina: [www.democracy-nc.org](http://www.democracy-nc.org)**



## 5 Steps to Registering Voters

1. **Know** the Laws on Registration
2. **Learn** About Deadlines & Forms
3. **Make** a Registration Drive Plan
4. **Know** the Rights of NC Voters
5. **Register & Educate** Voters



## Step 1: Know the Law

- ✓ Anyone can register voters. No special certification is required.
- ✓ Tax-exempt organizations may only conduct nonpartisan voter drives.
- ✓ If you accept a form, you **MUST** turn it in or you are breaking the law.
- ✓ If required items on the form are left blank, the registration can be delayed or denied.



## Step 1: Know the Law

### **Federal law requires new voters to show identification to register:**

- Voters can put their driver's license number on the voter registration form; - or -
- Provide the last 4-digits of their Social Security number on the voter registration form; - or -
- Mail in a copy of an acceptable form of I.D. with their voter registration form; - or -
- Provide an acceptable form of I.D. when they go to vote the first time.



## Step 1: Know the Law

### Acceptable forms of identification include:

Driver's License, state-issued ID, military ID, passport, bank and/or utility statement, paycheck, government issued check or other government document showing current address.



**Note:** a driver's license showing a new voter's current address is all they need to register!



## Step 1: Know the Law

- ✓ People must have lived at an address at least 30 days prior to an election to vote from that address.
- ✓ Coercing people to register with a particular party is against the law!
- ✓ Volunteers can fill out a registration form for someone but the registering voter **MUST** sign the form themselves.



## Step 1: Know the Law

**Never let someone deliberately provide false information on a voter registration form.**

- ✓ It's a felony.
- ✓ It's also a felony to fraudulently vote.

**Someone who registers and votes using false information is committing two felonies.**



## Step 1: Know the Law

**Homeless people are eligible to register to vote.**

- ✓ They should draw a map showing where they sleep and provide a mailing address where they “intend to return to.”
- ✓ This can be a shelter or community center.



## Step 1: Know the Law

**Ex-felons in NC may register and vote once they have completed the terms of their sentence.**

- ✓ If they have completed their sentence, parole and probation, their right to vote is automatically restored.
- ✓ They do need to register to vote, even if they were registered before incarceration.
- ✓ Misdemeanants never lose the right to vote, even when in jail. They may vote by Absentee Ballot.



## Step 2: Learn the Rules

### **Respect the deadlines:**

- ✓ Turn in or mail forms to the Board of Elections within 7 days of completion.
- ✓ Beware of the 25-day deadline before Election Day: this is October 10<sup>th</sup> for the 2008 election.
- ✓ Recommend Same Day Registration & Voting if the 25-day deadline has passed: SDR takes place from October 16<sup>th</sup> until November 1<sup>st</sup> this year.



# Step 2: Learn the Rules

## Know the form:

Request English and/or Spanish language registration forms from County Board of Elections offices, from Democracy NC or from the NC State Board of Elections at (919) 733-7173. Forms can also be printed online at: [www.sboe.state.nc.us](http://www.sboe.state.nc.us).

**North Carolina Voter Registration Application/Update Form**  
Print Information and Sign Below

**I Attest, Under Penalty of Perjury, that:** (Answer YES or NO to the following questions.)

YES NO

I am a United States citizen.

I am 18 years old, or will be by general election day.

I have been a resident at this address for 30 days or more. If less than 30 days, I moved here on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

I will not vote in any other county or state after submission of this form. If I am registered elsewhere, I am canceling that registration at this time.

I have not been convicted of a felony; or if I have been convicted of a felony, my rights of citizenship have been restored.

If you checked "NO" in response to any of these questions, **DO NOT COMPLETE THIS FORM**

**Section 1** ▶ Full legal name and birth date

Last Name (Required) \_\_\_\_\_ First Name (Required) \_\_\_\_\_  Jr  III  IV  
Middle Name (Required) \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth - MM/DD/YYYY (Required) \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 2** ▶ Personal Identification Number (Required)

Do you have a NC driver's license or NC identification card issued by DMV? If yes, provide the number.  Yes  No NC Driver License or Identification Number \_\_\_\_\_

If you do not have a DMV-issued card, do you have a U.S.-issued Social Security Number? If yes, provide last 4 digits.  Yes  No Social Security Number (Last Four Digits) \_\_\_\_\_

Have you been assigned a NC State Voter Registration Number? If yes, provide unless you provided one of the numbers above.  Yes  No NC State Voter Registration Number \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 3** ▶ Residence Address (Required)

Street Address where you live - No P.O. Boxes or Rural Roads \_\_\_\_\_ Apt./Unit \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
County \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

Map/Diagram: If you do not have a exact address, draw a map of where you reside. Please include roads and landmarks.

Phone (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_ Have you lived here for 30 days or more?  Yes  No  
If no, date moved \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 4** ▶ Mailing Address

Address where you get your mail (if different from your residence address.) \_\_\_\_\_ Apt./Unit \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 5** ▶ Gender  Female  Male

**Section 6** ▶ Race/Ethnicity  American Indian/Alaska Native  Asian  Black/African American  Other  Hispanic/Latine  White  Two or More

**Section 7** ▶ Political Party Affiliation  Democratic  Republican  Unaffiliated  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 8** ▶ Name and address used for your last voter registration if applicable


Last Name used in Previous Registration \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Previous Address \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Previous City \_\_\_\_\_ Previous County \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE CONTENTS OF THIS FORM**

**WARNING: If you sign this card and know it to be false, you can be convicted of a Class 1 felony**

version 12007-1 web To Mail - Place this completed and signed form in an envelope addressed to your local County Board of Elections office. Be sure to affix the proper USPS postage stamp.





## Step 2: Learn the Rules

**“Answer First” boxes must be completed in order for the voter registration form to be processed by the Board of Elections.**

- ✓ If someone checks NO to either the citizen question or age minimum question, **DO NOT** allow them to complete the form.



## Step 2: Learn the Rules

**First-time registrants should provide I.D. information.**

- ✓ **Either driver's license number or the last 4-digits of Social Security number should be indicated on the registration form.**
- ✓ **If someone is unsure if they have registered before, they should provide I.D. information.**



## Step 2: Learn the Rules

**Form MUST be signed and dated by the person registering to vote.**

- ✓ Encourage all registering voters to include their phone numbers.
- ✓ Use a regular registration form to help people cancel their previous registration at a former address and register at their new address.



## Step 3: Make a Plan

### Which way should you go, site-based or door-to-door?

- ✓ One advantage to door-to-door drives: You can target an area or precinct based on demographics.
- ✓ Site-based drives let you register people from many different areas (a less predictable approach).
- ✓ Door-to-door registration drives can be effective but site-based drives often yield more registrations by the end of the day.



## Step 3: Make a Plan

**Select a good location and be creative!  
Where can you find new voters that have  
been overlooked by others?**

- ✓ Churches, workplaces, public places, shopping centers and neighborhoods all have lots of traffic.
- ✓ Are there other groups working in you area you could join forces with so you aren't duplicating effort?
- ✓ Be sure to get permission from site owners to set up shop and respect their nonpartisan vs. partisan wishes. Churches and schools **MUST** be nonpartisan!



## Step 3: Make a Plan

**Schedule your drive for the right time given the chosen date and location.**

- ✓ Pick a good time of day and day of the week: when will the most people be there?
- ✓ Consider why they are there – will they have time to stop and take ten minutes to register to vote?
- ✓ Saturdays and Sundays at shopping centers and grocery stores are great!



## Step 3: Make a Plan

**Work with other local groups to set up on-going voter registration activities and tie them to other celebrations.**

- ✓ **Example: the Ministerial Alliance in your city might agree to a Sunday registration drive at local churches.**
- ✓ **Use calendar hooks like the 4th of July, Flag Day, Veteran's Day, Mother's Day, the day women gained the right to vote (August 24<sup>th</sup>) and more....**



## Step 3: Make a Plan

### You will need these materials:

- ✓ Voter Registration Forms (in English and Spanish, depending on where you live)
- ✓ Clipboards
- ✓ Ink Pens
- ✓ Table/Chairs (for you and for voters!)
- ✓ Pop-up-canopy or tent for shelter (in case of sun or rain)
- ✓ Voter education flyers



## Step 3: Make a Plan

### You may also need these materials:

- ✓ Good signs: “REGISTER TO VOTE HERE” –or – “R U REGISTERED TO VOTE?”
- ✓ Signs, tee-shirts, balloons and other decorations will all help attract potential registrants.
- ✓ Street and precinct information so people know where to vote (get from your County Board of Elections office).
- ✓ Nonpartisan voter education materials (sample ballots, issue flyers, etc.).



## Step 3: Make a Plan

### Some tips for scheduling volunteers:

- ✓ Volunteers should sign up for 3- to 4-hour shifts.
- ✓ It's more fun to work in teams.
- ✓ Expect about 75% of the people who sign up to actually show up. (Example: If 10 people say "I'll be there," expect 7 or 8 to show up.)
- ✓ Have at least 3 volunteers to handle the crowd if you are working a festival or fair.
- ✓ At least one volunteer should know all basic voter rights and rules: [www.2008ElectionConnection.com](http://www.2008ElectionConnection.com).



## Step 3: Make a Plan

### More tips for scheduling volunteers:

- ✓ Make phone calls to volunteers the night before the registration drive to remind them of their shift.
- ✓ Ask people if they are comfortable working alone or if they want a partner: pair the inexperienced with the experienced.
- ✓ Make sure the drive leader is available by phone to answer questions from volunteers.



## Step 4: Register Voters

### Tips for attracting voters:

- ✓ Don't be shy! If people are already registered or don't want to: they will let you know!
- ✓ Having children at the table or booth also relaxes people and helps attract registrants.
- ✓ Approach people with pen, clipboard and form in hand: "Let's get you registered to vote so your voice can be heard. It only takes 3 minutes."
- ✓ Enthusiasm works! If volunteers are excited and friendly, people are more likely to register,



## Tips for Registering Voters

### **Create a convenient environment.**

- ✓ **Have chairs for people to sit in while registering to vote.**
- ✓ **In high traffic areas with many people registering at the same time, let people to fill out their own forms then have volunteers double check them.**
- ✓ **After registering a person to vote, ask them if anyone else they are with needs to register as well.**



## Tips for Registering Voters

**Always try to get the form filled out on the spot!**

- ✓ You keep the form and make sure it gets turned in properly and on time.
- ✓ If someone wants to take a form with them, be sure they know the sections to fill out and where to mail it when they are done!



## Tips for Registering Voters

**Think ahead to when it's time to get out the vote!**

- ✓ **Make copies of all registration forms for voter turn-out purposes before turning them into the Board of Elections.**
- ✓ **Copies should black out sensitive information like Social Security and driver's license numbers.**



## Tips for Registering Voters

**Don't get discouraged: Voter registration can be a slow process!**

- ✓ On average, site-based voter drives yield 8 to 10 registrations an hour per volunteer.
- ✓ Remember: every new voter is a victory for democracy!



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What if I've moved since the last time I voted?**

**“You should re-register at your current address and cancel your old registration. You can do it at the same time using this one form – would you like one?”**

**Visit [www.2008ElectionConnection](http://www.2008ElectionConnection)  
For more information on voting in NC!**



# Frequently Asked Questions

**What if I'm not 18 yet,  
but will be soon?**

**“If you are going to be 18 years of age  
by the time of the General Election on  
November 4th, you can register to vote.”**

**Visit [www.2008ElectionConnection](http://www.2008ElectionConnection)  
For more information on voting in NC!**



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What if I've been convicted of a felony?**

**“Once you have served all the terms of your sentence, including parole and probation, you are automatically eligible to register and vote in North Carolina. But you do need to register, even if you were already registered before your conviction. I have the form you need right here.”**

**Visit [www.2008ElectionConnection](http://www.2008ElectionConnection)  
For more information on voting in NC!**



## Frequently Asked Questions

**Do I need to bring I.D.  
with me to vote?**

**“You should take your I.D. with you just in case, but you are only required to show I.D. if you are a newly registered voter and you did not provide your driver’s license, state I.D. number or the last four digits of your Social Security number on the registration form.”**

**Visit [www.2008ElectionConnection](http://www.2008ElectionConnection)  
For more information on voting in NC!**



## Frequently Asked Questions

**Do I have to have my voter card with me in order to vote?**

**“No. But your voter registration card does have helpful information on it, like your voting precinct and legislative district information.”**

**Visit [www.2008ElectionConnection](http://www.2008ElectionConnection)  
For more information on voting in NC!**



## Frequently Asked Questions

### Where is my polling place?

- If you have a master street list from your County Board of Elections, look up their address and polling place in the book. Otherwise, tell them:

“You will receive a voting card in 7 to 10 days that provides you with this information. You can also call the Board of Elections for this information.”

**Visit [www.2008ElectionConnection](http://www.2008ElectionConnection)  
For more information on voting in NC!**



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What if I'm not sure if I'm already registered to vote?**

**“Go ahead and register today. If you are already registered, then your new registration will simply not be processed. But you should call the Board of Elections in a few weeks, just to be sure, if you haven't received a voter registration card in the mail.”**

**Visit [www.2008ElectionConnection](http://www.2008ElectionConnection)  
For more information on voting in NC!**



## Frequently Asked Questions

### Which party should I register to vote for?

- ✓ You cannot tell someone which party to register as. You can answer questions regarding which party certain politicians belong to if asked.
- ✓ If people don't put any political party on the form, they will be registered as "Unaffiliated."
- ✓ Unaffiliated voters are allowed to vote in partisan primaries: they just have to ask for either the Democratic or Republican ballot when they vote.



## Frequently Asked Questions

**Why does the government need to know my race and other personal information?**

**“North Carolina is a Voting Rights Act state. Providing this information helps the state ensure that it has a fair registration and election process and that everyone is being granted an equal right to vote.”**

**Visit [www.2008ElectionConnection](http://www.2008ElectionConnection)  
For more information on voting in NC!**



## Frequently Asked Questions

**I registered but never received my voter registration card. What should I do?**

**“You can always register to vote again today just to be sure that you are registered. You can also call the County Board of Elections or search on-line at the NC State Board of Elections website to see if you are already registered to vote.”**

**Visit [www.2008ElectionConnection](http://www.2008ElectionConnection)  
For more information on voting in NC!**



## Frequently Asked Questions

**I registered but got a letter saying I needed to mail in a form or something.**

“It probably had to do with providing identification or proof of residence. You can register to vote again today just to be sure that you are registered in time for the upcoming election. You can also call the County Board of Elections or look on the NC Board of Elections website to see if you are registered.”

**Visit [www.2008ElectionConnection](http://www.2008ElectionConnection)  
For more information on voting in NC!**



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What if I don't want to register as a Democrat or a Republican?**

**“That’s fine. You can register as an Unaffiliated voter. You get the same ballot in the General Election as everyone else. You can even still vote in future primaries if you ask for a specific party’s ballot when you vote in a Primary.”**

**Visit [www.2008ElectionConnection](http://www.2008ElectionConnection)  
For more information on voting in NC!**



## Frequently Asked Questions

**Does my vote count  
if I vote absentee?**

**“Yes, your vote will count just  
like everyone else’s if you vote  
by Absentee Ballot.”**

**Visit [www.2008ElectionConnection](http://www.2008ElectionConnection)  
For more information on voting in NC!**



# Frequently Asked Questions

## How do I get an absentee ballot?

- ✓ Write a letter requesting ballots for the next election or full election year. Include your name, voting address and where you want your ballots to be mailed to. Your phone number and birth date are helpful, but not required.
- ✓ If you are registered Unaffiliated, you must declare which party's Primary (Democrat or Republican) you wish to vote in (Primary voting requests only).
- ✓ Sign the request and mail it or fax it to your county Board of Elections.



## Frequently Asked Questions

**Does my vote count  
if I early vote?**

**“Yes, early votes count just like  
votes cast on Election Day.”**

**Visit [www.2008ElectionConnection](http://www.2008ElectionConnection)  
For more information on voting in NC!**



## Frequently Asked Questions

**How do I know that the electronic voting machine is counting my vote?**

**“There is a paper record of votes on electronic voting machines to verify that they are working correctly. Plus all County Board of Elections in North Carolina are required to perform random audits on voting machines to verify their accuracy.”**



# Voting Rights in N.C.

**You can register to vote in any North Carolina county if you are:**

- ✓ A citizen of the United States; and
- ✓ A person 18 years of age or older, or who will be 18 years of age by the date of the next General Election (November 4, 2008); and
- ✓ A legal resident of the county you are registering within, and have been a legal resident for at least 30 days before the date of the next election.



# Voting Rights in N.C.

## You have the right to vote without presenting ID

- ✓ However: if you are a first time voter, identification may be required.
- ✓ Take a current and valid photo ID, or a document showing your current name and address, such as a current utility bill or paycheck, with you the first time you vote just in case you need it.



# Voting Rights in N.C

**Misdemeanants have the right to vote while incarcerated.**

- ✓ If someone is convicted of a misdemeanor in North Carolina, they retain their right to vote, even if they go to jail.
- ✓ They may vote by Absentee Ballot while serving their sentence.



# Voting Rights in N.C

**Ex-felons have the right to vote if they have completed the terms of their sentence.**

- ✓ People convicted of a felony in North Carolina temporarily lose citizenship rights, including the right to vote.
- ✓ After completing all the terms of their sentence (including parole and probation), their right to vote is automatically restored -- but they must register again to exercise that right.



# Voting Rights in N.C.

**You have the right to vote in your new precinct or at a central location:**

- ✓ If you moved within the same precinct or changed your name, even if you failed to tell your BOE.
- ✓ If you have moved and lived in your new location for 30 days or more.
- ✓ If you have lived in your new location less than 30 days, you must vote at your old precinct or cast a provisional ballot at your new precinct.



# Voting Rights in N.C.

**If you missed the registration deadline, you can vote using Same Day Registration.**

- ✓ You can register and vote at a One-Stop Site during Early Voting, which lasts from 19 to 3 days before Election Day (Oct. 16<sup>th</sup> to November 1<sup>st</sup>):
  - Go to a Early Voting Site in your county of residence;
  - Fill out a voter registration application; and
  - Provide proof of residency.
- ✓ You may not use SDR on Election Day.



# Voting Rights in N.C.

**You have the right to vote by Absentee Ballot if you want.**

- ✓ If you are registered to vote and are unable to vote in person on Election Day, you may request an Absentee Ballot.
- ✓ In North Carolina, you are not required to provide an excuse to vote absentee by mail.
- ✓ To vote by Absentee Ballot, send a signed written request to the county Board of Elections office no later than the Tuesday prior to Election Day.



# Voting Rights in N.C.

## You have the right to vote early.

- ✓ Early voting allows registered voters to cast their ballots in person prior to Election Day at special Early Voting sites.
- ✓ You may vote at any of your county's One-Stop voting sites during the Early Voting period, which lasts from 19 to 3 days before Election Day (October 16<sup>th</sup> to November 1<sup>st</sup> this year).
- ✓ No standing in long lines on Election Day!



## **Voting Rights in N.C.**

**You have the right to vote with assistance if you need it.**

- ✓ **You can request a precinct transfer if your precinct is inaccessible to you.**
- ✓ **You can use curbside voting if you are unable to enter the voting place.**
- ✓ **You may be eligible for assistance from a person of your choice.**



# Voting Rights in N.C.

## **Any voter is entitled to assistance from a near relative:**

- ✓ You must tell the precinct official that you desire assistance, stating the reason why it is needed.
- ✓ You must tell the precinct official who the relative is you wish to receive assistance from.
- ✓ The person rendering assistance cannot persuade you to cast your ballot in any particular way nor keep any record of how you marked your ballot.



# Voting Rights in N.C.

**You have the right to assistance from a person of your choice if:**

- ✓ You are unable to enter the voting booth without assistance due to physical disability;
- ✓ You are unable to mark the ballots without assistance due to physical disability;
- ✓ You are unable to mark the ballots without assistance on account of illiteracy;
- ✓ You are unable to enter the voting booth or mark the ballots without assistance on account of blindness.



## Voting Rights in N.C.

### You have the right to ask for a Provisional Ballot if:

- ✓ You believe you have registered to vote, but your name is not on the voter rolls; or
- ✓ If you question the voting district (or ballot) assigned to you; or
- ✓ If you are told that you are in the wrong precinct.
- ✓ After the election, you can check the status of your Provisional Ballot vote at:

<http://www.sboe.state.nc.us/provisionalvoting/>



# Voting Rights in N.C.

**You have the right to request  
another ballot:**

- ✓ If you make a mistake and “spoil” your first ballot.
- ✓ You can “spoil” up to 2 ballots.



# Voting Rights in N.C.

**You have the right to vote without being intimidated:**

- ✓ Election Protection is the nation's most far-reaching effort to protect voter rights.
- ✓ A nationwide toll-free Voters' Hotline provides free, multi-lingual assistance to voters and assists voters turned away at the polls.
- ✓ For Assistance on Election Day, call:

**1-866-OUR-VOTE**



# Voter Registration in North Carolina

A complete guide to registering and  
educating North Carolina voters.

Democracy North Carolina: [www.democracy-nc.org](http://www.democracy-nc.org) and  
[www.2008ElectionConnection.com](http://www.2008ElectionConnection.com)