

NC's NEW Photo ID Requirements to Vote: What the Law Says, How to Help

The new ID law “requires” voters to show an acceptable photo ID, beginning later in 2019 – but also has exceptions so people can vote in person without one. The law is complex; it will be hard to administer and will be a barrier to some voters. **Let's overcome confusion, help people get an acceptable ID, and fight anti-voting laws with more voting!** Keep up with the fight and protect voters in the process by regularly visiting demnc.co/protectvoters.

Three ways to protect voters – and how you can help:

1. **First, keep up with what's happening with the law.** Among other problems, this law accepts some photo IDs but not others, and has biases that will harm people based on their race, income, age, gender and mobility – just like the last ID law. It's therefore possible that the law will be challenged in court.
2. **Second, help advocate for voter-friendly rules.** The State Board of Elections must write guidelines to implement the new law through a rule-making process that is open to the public.
3. **Third, help educate voters now about their rights** and what the ID requirement really means.

ACCEPTABLE IDs. The law says voters should show one of these photo IDs when they vote in person; the ID can be expired for up to one year:

- NC driver's license;
- Photo ID from your county board of elections; it will be free to registered voters who give last 4 digits of their Social Security # and birthdate (there may be other requirements, as well); and is good for 10 years;
- Non-driver's ID from NC DMV; it's free to citizens who show a birth certificate and other documents;
- US passport;
- Enrollment card from a US or NC recognized tribe;
- Student ID from a NC private or public college or community college that follows strict procedures for issuing ID cards, under State Board of Election rules; after 2020, the card must have an expiration date;
- NC state or local government employee ID card issued under strict procedures; cards issued after the 2020 election must have an expiration date;
- US military or veterans card, even if it does not have an expiration date;
- Driver's license from another state, but only good for 90 days after the person registers to vote in NC.

OTHER FEATURES

- If you have an acceptable, unexpired ID at age 65, it's good for life– its expiration no longer matters.
- The address on your ID does not matter; the law says ID is only used to prove who you are, not where you live.
- Mail-in absentee voters must send a copy of an identity document with their ballot request or with the returned ballot; rules will clarify how this works.

EXCEPTIONS IF YOU HAVE NO ID AT THE POLLS

- You can vote a provisional ballot, but then you must take an acceptable ID to your county elections board by the day before election results are certified (canvass day);
- You can vote a provisional ballot and not show any ID at the polls IF:
 - you have a religious objection to being photographed

- and sign an affidavit affirming your identity;
- you live in an area with a natural disaster declared by the president or governor within 100 days of Election Day and you sign an identity affidavit;
- you sign an identity affidavit and give a reason for not having an acceptable ID. The form for stating a “reasonable impediment” includes such reasons as lack of transportation, disability or illness, work schedule, ID lost or stolen, and “other” with a blank line to fill in. Rules must clarify what's an acceptable reason.

QUESTIONS THAT NEED ANSWERS. There are a number of things we still do not know, and that **you can urge the State Board of Elections to address through rulemaking and action**, including:

- The law says your name on the ID may also be different from your name on the voter roll, **but not how different.**
- Poll workers or anyone else can challenge the voter's ID at the polls, but it's not clear **how to judge if the ID “reasonably resembles” the voter.** This is a key area in our advocacy for good rules.
 - County elections boards must begin issuing photo ID cards by May 1, 2019; **they will need equipment, supplies, training, and rules to achieve this goal.**
 - The State Board must conduct a **large education program**, with mailings to all voters. Remember: funds are provided for counties and the Board, but they are not enough.

For more information and resources, visit Democracy NC's online ID Hub at demnc.co/protectvoters.

(Resource updated as of December 19, 2018.)