

## What is Provisional Voting?

### What is a provisional ballot?

A provisional ballot is used when there is a question about a voter's eligibility to vote. These questions can arise for a variety of reasons, including voting at the wrong precinct, moving without updating one's voter registration, or other issues with the voter record. State law mandates that no person shall be denied the option to vote a provisional ballot. In no circumstance should a voter be turned away.

### Do provisional ballots count?

In 2020, 60% of provisional ballots cast were not counted. The greatest factors in provisional ballot rejection rates were registration (72%) and voting out of precinct (11%). Official election results are not final until every provisional ballot is reviewed. An out-of-precinct voter's ballot will count in all state and county-wide races, and in many other races at the top of the ticket. But, because an out-of-precinct voter is voting a ballot different from the one at their own precinct, there may be races where their vote doesn't count.

### How do voters cast provisional ballots? What happens to them?

1. Poll workers at the check-in station determine that the voter is ineligible to cast a regular ballot. The voter will be directed to the help desk.
  - If the problem is out-of-precinct voting (meaning the voter is in the right county, but the wrong precinct) the voter **MUST BE GIVEN THE CHOICE** to vote a provisional ballot at the polling place where they are OR go to their correct precinct where they will be able to vote a regular ballot.
  - If a voter who is out of precinct on Election Day was not given both choices (to go to their correct precinct OR cast a provisional ballot), please call 888-OUR-VOTE.
2. The help desk worker will give them a form, called a "provisional ballot application." After filling out the form, the voter will be given the ballot to vote.
  - Regardless of the issue, the voter should be offered a provisional ballot to vote.
3. After voting the provisional ballot, the voter will receive a Provisional Identification Number (PIN). The voter can use this, along with their date of birth, to check the status of their provisional ballot. This status will be available 10 days after the date of the election.
4. Following the election, nonpartisan County Board of Elections (CBOE) staff will review each provisional ballot and conduct research to determine whether the voter was properly registered and if the ballot can be counted, in whole or in part.
  - Voters who were denied a normal ballot for identification purposes have until 10 days after Election Day to provide ID to their county board of elections.
  - Voters who have additional information that will assist staff in their research should contact their CBOE.
5. The decision to count in full, partially count, or not count a provisional ballot is made during the statewide Canvass, which takes place 10 days after Election Day. Each CBOE will meet on this day to vote on provisional ballots; any voter may attend the Canvass.

To check the status of a provisional vote, the voter may check online at <https://vt.ncsbe.gov/RegProvPIN> or call (919) 814-0700 or (866) 522-4723