WHO CAN VOTE

Can I vote in Georgia?

- You can vote in the November 6 election if you’re registered to vote by Tuesday, October 9 (October 8 is Columbus Day).
- You can register if you meet all of the following qualifications:
  1. you’re a U.S. citizen;
  2. you’re a resident of Georgia and of the county in which you wish to vote;
  3. you’ll be at least 18 years old on Election Day;
  4. you’re not serving a sentence for a felony conviction; and
  5. you haven’t been declared by a court to be “mentally incompetent.”

What if I’m a student?

- You can register to vote at whatever address you regard as your primary residence. This can be either your school address or your home address.
- If you moved within your county and didn’t re-register, you can vote at your old polling place and file your change of address when you vote.
- If you moved to a new county before October 9, and didn’t re-register, you can’t vote in this election.
- If you moved to a new county after October 9, you can vote at your old polling place.

REGISTRATION

How do I register?

- You can register to vote:
  1. in person, by filling out a voter registration form at your local elections office;
  2. by mail, by filling out a mail-in voter registration form and mailing it to your local elections office;
  3. when you apply for services at the Department of Driver Services, Department of Natural Resources (e.g., hunting and fishing licenses) and state agencies that provide public assistance (such as Medicaid, WIC, and food stamps) or services to people with disabilities. You may also be able to register at many other state and federal offices and agencies, such as military recruitment centers.
  4. You can get mail-in voter registration forms from your local board of registrars, from most libraries, colleges and high schools, or online at http://sos.georgia.gov/elections/vrinfo.htm. Your county board of registrars can be located using http://sos.georgia.gov/cgi-bin/countyregistrarsindex.asp.

What’s the registration deadline?

- October 9, 2012. If registering by mail, your registration must be postmarked by this date.

How do I know if I’m registered?

- You should receive a voter registration card a few weeks after you register. You can also check your registration status online at http://mvp.sos.state.ga.us/ or by calling your county elections office.

VOTING EARLY

Can I vote before Election Day?

- Yes. Any registered voter can vote before Election Day by casting an absentee ballot or advance in-person voting. You don’t need a reason.
  - Advance voting allows any registered voter to vote in person at special advance voting centers beginning October 15, 2012. Contact your county board of registrars for the location and hours of an advance voting center near you, including Saturday hours.

Can I vote absentee?

- Absentee voting allows any registered voter to vote by mail. Your absentee ballot must be received by the registrar or absentee ballot clerk in your county no later than 7 p.m. on Election Day.
  - To get an absentee ballot, submit an application form to your county elections office by mail, fax, email or by hand no later than October 29. Forms are available at your county board of registrars or at http://sos.georgia.gov/elections/vrinfo.htm. If your application is approved, the ballot will be mailed to you. If you are a military or overseas voter, you can choose to receive your ballot by email.

VOTING ON ELECTION DAY

When are the polls open?

- Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. You have the right to vote if you’re in line or inside your polling place when the polls close.

Can I get time off from work to vote?

- If your work schedule would prevent you from voting in person while the polls are open, you have the right to take time off from work (up to two hours) in order to vote. You have to give your employer reasonable notice of your need to take time off, and your employer has the right to specify which hours you get to take.

VOTER ID

Do I have to show ID?

- Yes. Georgia law requires all voters to show some form of photo identification before receiving a ballot.

What are the accepted forms of ID?

- Acceptable forms of ID include:
  1. a driver’s license or other state-issued identification card;
  2. a Georgia voter registration card;
  3. a United States military identification card;
  4. a United States passport;
  5. a federal or state government identification card;
  6. a facsimile or digital image of one of the above forms of ID.

What if I need help in the voting booth?

- If you are over 75 or need assistance in voting due to a disability, you may ask a poll worker to be given priority.
- If you need help because of a physical disability or because you can’t read the ballot, tell a poll worker. You have the right to vote on an accessible voting machine and to have someone assist you.
- If you are unable to use a voting machine due to disability, you must be provided with a paper ballot.

Can I get a ballot in my native language?

- Most election materials in Georgia are available in English only, but you have the right to bring an interpreter with you to the polls or to get language assistance from anyone you choose, including a poll worker, as long as the person is not your employer, an agent of your employer, or an officer or agent of your labor union.

What if I am disabled and my polling place is not accessible?

- If your county uses certain types of optical or digital voting machines, your county superintendent is required to make such a machine, along with a sample ballot, available for inspection before the November 6, 2012 general election, along with someone capable of instructing on the machine’s use.

WHERE DO I VOTE?

Where do I vote?

- On Election Day, you have to vote at the polling place to which you’re assigned, which will be listed on the voter registration card you receive in the mail when you register. You can also look up your polling place online at http://mvp.sos.state.ga.us/.

Can I bring voting literature to the polls?

- Yes. You can take written or printed election materials with you as long as they’re for your own use. You’re not allowed to show or distribute these materials to anyone else within 150 feet of your polling place, and you’re not allowed to wear campaign clothing, stickers, or buttons in your polling place unless you cover them up.

What if I’ve been convicted of a crime?

- If you moved within your county and didn’t re-register, you can’t vote in this election.
- If you moved to a new county before October 9, and didn’t re-register, you can’t vote in this election.
- If you moved to a new county after October 9, you can vote at your old polling place.

What if I’m homeless?

- You don’t need a home to register, but you do have to identify a place of residence (which can be a street corner, a park, a shelter, or any other place where you usually stay). You must also provide a mailing address, which may be of a local advocacy organization, shelter, outreach center or anywhere else willing to accept mail on your behalf.

What if I’ve moved or changed my name?

- You have to re-register every time you move or change your name.
- If you moved within your county and didn’t re-register, you can vote at your old polling place and file your change of address when you vote.
- If you moved to a new county before October 9, and didn’t re-register, you can’t vote in this election.
- If you moved to a new county after October 9, you can vote at your old polling place.

VOTER ID

Do I have to show ID?

- Yes. Georgia law requires all voters to show some form of photo identification before receiving a ballot.

What are the accepted forms of ID?

- Acceptable forms of ID include:
[1] a Georgia driver’s license, even if expired, or a Georgia voter ID card;
[2] a valid state or federal government-issued ID card, including an ID card from a public university, college, or technical school in Georgia (with photo);
[3] a valid U.S. military ID card (with photo);
[4] a valid employee ID card (with photo) issued by any division of the federal government or the government of Georgia;
[5] a valid tribal ID card (with photo); and

What if I don’t have any ID?
- If you don’t have any of those approved forms of ID, the state will provide you a free voter ID card. Contact your county registrar or Department of Driver Services Office for more information.
- If you have ID but not with you, get your ID and return to the polling place to stay open after normal business hours.

What is a provisional ballot?
- A provisional ballot is used to record your vote when there’s an unresolved question about your eligibility or if a court orders the polling place to stay open after normal business hours.

Will my provisional ballot be counted?
- Only if election officials determine after the election that you were eligible to vote. For a variety of reasons most provisional ballots aren’t counted, and you should use one only if there’s no way for you to vote on a regular ballot.

PROBLEMS AT THE POLLS

What if I’m not on the voter list?
- Ask a poll worker to check the list again and confirm that you’re at the right polling place.
- If you’re at the right polling place but your name isn’t on the voter list, ask for a provisional ballot. You have the right to cast a provisional ballot, even if your name is not on the voter list, as long as you’re willing to swear that you believe you are registered to vote.

What if I go to the wrong polling place?
- You can ask a poll worker to help you find the right polling place. You can also call your county elections office or look up your polling place online at http://mvp.sos.state.ga.us/.
- If you can’t figure out where you’re registered, go to the polling place that you think is most likely to be the right one for your address and ask for a provisional ballot.

What if someone challenges my right to vote?
- If anyone challenges your eligibility to vote even though you’re on the list of registered voters, the registrars will hold a hearing at the polling place to rule on the challenge. If they rule in your favor, you’ll be allowed to cast a regular ballot. If they can’t make a ruling during voting hours, you’ll be allowed to vote a challenged ballot.

What if someone tries to intimidate or harass me?
- You should report the incident to the chief manager of the polling place. If the chief manager is the problem, tell a poll watcher, call your county elections office, or call one of the election hotline numbers listed at the end of this card.

What if I make a mistake on my ballot or the voting machine malfunctions?
- Tell a poll worker before you cast your vote. If you spoil a paper ballot, you have the right to a replacement ballot as long as you catch your mistake before you cast your ballot. If your voting machine malfunctions, you can request a different machine or a paper ballot.

How do I make a complaint?
- Ask for the chief manager at your polling place, who can handle most routine complaints that arise on Election Day. Candidates, political parties, and nonprofit groups may also have poll watchers who might be able to assist you. If any of those people ask you who you voted for, or if they can’t resolve your complaint, call your county elections office or the Secretary of State.
- You can also call one of the election hotline numbers listed at the end of this card.

MORE INFORMATION

Georgia State Elections Division:
(404) 656-2871 or http://sos.georgia.gov/elections/

ACLU Voter Protection Hotline:
(877) 523-2792

ACLU of Georgia:
(770) 303-9966

Election Protection:
866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683)

US Department of Justice Voting Section:
(800) 253-3931

KNOW YOUR VOTING RIGHTS

Election Day is Tuesday, November 6, 2012

This card is designed to help protect your right to vote. Keep it handy, and take it with you to the polls on Election Day.

TIPS FOR AVOIDING PROBLEMS

- Check your voter registration status at least 40 days before the election by going to http://mvp.sos.state.ga.us/ or calling your county elections office.
- Locate your polling place and note the hours of operation by going to http://mvp.sos.state.ga.us/ or calling your county elections office.
- Consider voting before Election Day using advance or absentee voting. If you plan to vote at the polls, go early in the day to avoid the last-minute rush.
- Bring at least one form of photo identification.
- Read all instructions carefully.
- Take your time.
- Ask for help if you need it.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) is a nationwide, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with more than 500,000 members dedicated to defending the principles of liberty and equality embodied in the Constitution and our nation's civil rights laws. The ACLU does not endorse or oppose any candidate or party, but we believe that no civil right is more important in our democracy than the right to vote.