



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & VOTER PROTECTION

Voter Pre-Registration Toolkit

INTRODUCTION

Voting should be accessible to all eligible Americans, including you. Most states require voters to be registered in order to vote. Although you must be at least 18 years old to vote, many states allow people under the age of 18 to pre-register. Once an individual is pre-registered to vote, they will automatically be registered to vote on their 18th birthday. For more detailed state by state information, call the Voter Hotline at 1-833-DEM-VOTE (1-833-336-8683).

PROCESS

You will fill out a voter registration application (either a physical form or online if your state allows it) and be added to the voter registration list with a “pending” or “pre-registration” status. Once you turn 18, you will be added to the voter registration list and able to cast a ballot.

STATE-BY-STATE PRE-REGISTRATION QUALIFICATIONS FOR ELECTIONS

Generally, in order to register to vote, you must:

- Be a United States citizen
- Meet your state’s residency requirement

However, states differ in the age at which you can pre-register to vote

1 state has no voter registration requirement

- North Dakota does not require people to register to vote though you need to bring some form of identification, such as a driver’s license.

13 states plus the District of Columbia permit pre-registration at the age of 16:

- California, Colorado, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Hawaii, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Utah, and Washington

5 states permit pre-registration beginning at 17 years of age:

- Iowa, Maine, Nevada, and New Jersey
- West Virginia requires pre-registering 17-year-olds to be 18 by Election Day



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6 states have different pre-registration requirements than those listed above:

- Alaska permits persons under 18 to register anytime within 90 days before their 18th birthday.
- Georgia and Missouri permit the registration of those who are 17.5 (if they turn 18 before the next election).
- Texas permits persons who are at least 17 years and ten months of age to register.
- New York permits persons under 18 to register if they will be 18 by December 31 of the year they are filing the form (beginning in 2020 New York will allow pre-registration for 16 year olds)
- Oklahoma permits persons under 18 to register if they will be 18 by the next election. For those persons turning 18 during the 60 days before an election, they may register between 25 and 60 days before the election.

25 states do not specify an age for registration but instead allow an individual to register if they will turn 18 by the next election:

- Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATION

17 states plus DC automatically register voters whenever an eligible voter interacts with government agencies (e.g. the department of motor vehicles to apply for a driver's license). 2 other states have passed legislation to implement automatic voter registration. People have the option to opt out of automatic voter registration.

- Alaska, California, Colorado, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, New Mexico, Nevada, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, and West Virginia
- Maine recently passed legislation to implement automatic voter registration and it will be implemented by January 1, 2022.
- Massachusetts has recently passed legislation to implement automatic voter registration and it will be implemented by January 2020.

As such, some of these states allow individuals who are 16 or 17 and who 1) are completing a driver's license or ID card transaction; and 2) will meet all other voter eligibility requirements, to be pre-registered to vote automatically, unless they choose to opt out.

DNC RESOURCES:

- National Voter Hotline: The Democratic Party Voter Hotline is available to answer questions from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (ET) Monday through Friday. Hotline hours may be extended near elections. Call us at 1-833-DEM-VOTE (1-833-336-8683) or email us at vopro@dnc.org.
- IWillVote.com: This website can provide information to help you register to vote and check your polling locations ahead of an election.