

THE ROAD TO THE VOTING BOOTH

Part III-A

A Toolkit for Voter Registration Drives

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Published as a Voter Service by
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Toolkit for Voter Registration Drives: Maintaining Our Gold Standard

The LWV is known to be expert in conducting voter registration drives. It is important that we maintain our reputation for being nonpartisan - that is, we do not support or oppose candidates or political parties. We must always strive to be nonpartisan in behavior and appearance. While planning for voter registration drives, consider the time, the place, and whether your League will run and staff the drive, or train volunteers from other organizations. Decide if volunteers will be collecting completed forms and if so, who will be responsible for getting the forms to the Board of Elections. Proper training of volunteers conducting voter registration events is important.

Included in this tool kit are:

- List of essential materials for voter registration drives
- Instructions for filling out a Voter Registration form
- Voter Registration Fact sheet
- Voter Information Resources with dates for 2019
- Voter Registration Drive: Data Tracking Form
- Template for signage stating our nonpartisan position; must be visible at all drives
- Template for Remind Me To Vote card. (As we are now emphasizing the importance of following-up with reminders to vote, it is important to decide how follow-up will be done, who will do it, and what contact information is needed. If you choose to do an opt-in, this template may be useful)

Essential Materials for Voter Registration Drives

Having all materials in portable bags with instructions makes it easy for volunteers. After each registration drive, refill them so they are ready for next drive:

- Voter registration forms in English and Spanish (NYC may need other languages)
- Sign about VOTE411.org
- Absentee Ballot applications in English and Spanish, and other languages as needed
- Blue and/or black pens
- Identifying signs and/or posters, LWV banner with clearly visible sign indicating LWV never supports or opposes a candidate or party
- Voter Registration Resource Sheet with election dates, registration dates, deadlines, etc.*
- Voter Registration Fact Sheet*
- Voter Registration Reporting Form*
- Signage: who needs to register (moved, changed name, change party)
- Identifying pins, tags, and/or T-shirts for volunteers
- Box or folder to keep completed voter registration forms if collecting them (optional)
- “Remind Me To Vote” cards, pad etc. so people can opt-in to get reminder to vote (optional)*
- Stamps to sell (except in NYC) if league can afford and not collecting forms (optional)
- LWVNYS “Voters Guide Part I and II” (when available)**
- “First Vote” in English and Spanish**
- List of political parties
- “Your Right To Vote In New York”
 - College Students**
 - Homeless Individuals**
 - Individuals with Disabilities**
 - Individuals with Mental Health Disabilities**
 - Individuals with Criminal Convictions and those detained in Jail or Prison**
- NYS Political Parties at a Glance
- Early Voting 2019
- Other Voting Reforms Passed in 2019

*templates are included in voter registration tool kit

** can be purchased from LWVNYS and online

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILLING OUT THE NYS VOTER REGISTRATION FORM

****Note: form must be completed in blue or black ink only.**


The numbers below refer to the question number on the NYS Voter Registration Form

1. Check yes or no. (*U.S. Citizen means either by birth or naturalized.*)
2. Check yes or no.
If you will be 18 by the end of the calendar year but not before election day, you can register but will not be able to vote until you are 18.
3. Enter all requested information. (*Suffix refers to Jr., Sr., II, etc.*)
4. Date of birth: ~~put down~~ use numbers for your month, date and year. For example, if your birthday is July 1, 1975, write: 07/01/1975.
5. This field is optional.
6. "Telephone" is optional; you do not need to supply this information, but if there is a question about your form, your identity, your residence etc. it will take less time to contact you by phone.
7. This field is optional.
8. Address where you live. Be sure to indicate the name of your county.
9. Mailing address. Fill in only if it is different from your home address (a box number, etc.).
10. Check "yes" if you have voted before, even if in another state or other NYS county.
11. Fill in the most recent year you voted before or enter a "?" if you don't remember.
12. If you voted before under a different name, a different address and/or in a different NYS county, write down what the old information was.
13. You must check one box. If you don't provide the last four digits of your SSN, or DMV number, you must bring verifiable ID information (*a valid photo ID, a current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, government check or some other government document that shows your name and address*) the first time you vote.
14. Check only one box, either the box next to the party of your choice, or the box next to "I do not wish to enroll in a party." (*If "Independence Party" is checked you will be enrolled in that party; you will not be considered an independent voter.*) Only voters registered in that party can vote in that party's primary. Choosing a party does not require you to vote for that party's candidate in the general election.
15. Two optional boxes: Check the appropriate box to request an absentee ballot application, or to indicate that you want to be an Election Day worker.
16. Read, sign, and date.
Reverse side of NYS voter registration form includes mailing addresses for all NYS County Boards of Elections (BOE). Completed form MUST be mailed to the County BOE of the voter's address. (Note that all 5 NYC boroughs mail to the Broadway address)

Consider becoming an Organ Donor. New York has the third highest need for donors in the US, yet the second lowest percentage of registered donors. Complete form on the reverse side.

If you do not receive a Confirmation of Registration from your local Board of Elections within a reasonable time after mailing your registration form, call them to make sure your application was received. Local Boards of Elections send registered voters a non-forwardable postcard in August to verify their residence, and to inform

them of the location of their polling place. If you do not receive this card, call your Board of Elections to make sure there is no problem with your registration.

		VOTER REGISTRATION FACT SHEET	
		If	Then
AGE	18 by December 31	Allowed to register	
	18 on election day	Allowed to vote in the election	
RESIDENT	Forgot to change address and moved within the county	Request an affidavit ballot from either the BOE or at the polling place.	
	Forgot to change address and moved from another county in NYS	Request affidavit ballot at your new polling place.	
	Moved and it is 30 days before the election	Fill out the voter registration form.	
HOMELESS	Homeless Living on the streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Write “homeless” above the section entitled: “The address where you live” ▪ Write the cross streets close to where you typically sleep to determine your polling place. ▪ Identify an address where you receive mail. 	
	Have a relationship with a Shelter,	Ask Shelter if they can receive mail for you and use the shelter’s address as mailing address.	
COLLEGE STUDENT	If attending college and not living at home	Choose between voting where your family lives via absentee ballot or registering to vote in your college community and going to the polls there. Check first to see if that state where you are attending college will allow you to vote there.	
CRIMINAL HISTORY	If convicted of a felony and on parole	As of 2018, some are granted a partial pardon and be able to vote.	
	If convicted of a felony and in prison	Denied voting privileges	
	If convicted of a felony and on probation	Allowed to register and vote	
	If convicted of a misdemeanor	Allowed to register and vote	
NAME CHANGE	Changed names	Fill out a new voter registration form to update the files.	
	Changed names, but forgot to fill out the voter registration before the election	Go to the polls, sign your former name on the line, and then sign your new name above it.	

DISABLED OR ILL	Assigned polling place not accessible	Submit a request to the Board of Elections 2 weeks prior to the election to get assigned an accessible polling place.
	Handicapping condition makes it impossible to travel to the polls	Submit an application to the Board of Elections to receive permanent status to receive absentee ballots annually.
PARTY ENROLLMENT	Wish to change party enrollment before next year's primary election	Fill out voter registration form. Have until Feb. 14, 2020 to change party enrollment for 2020 primary.
	Wish to change party enrollment before current year's primary election	Fill out voter registration form to change to new party and then vote in the party's primary you were previous enrolled in.

VOTER INFORMATION RESOURCES

UPCOMING ELECTION DATES

General Election

NOVEMBER 5, 2019

You can register to vote if you will be 18 years old by the end of the calendar year.

You must be 18 years old on election day to vote.

IMPORTANT DEADLINES FOR THE NOVEMBER 5, 2019 GENERAL ELECTION

- October 11, 2019 - Last day to postmark voter registration form (must be received by October, 2019) or register in person at BOE
- February 14, 2020 – last day to change party enrollment for 2020 primaries
- October 26, 2019 – early voting available through November 3, 2019
- October 29, 2019 – last day to postmark application for absentee application
- November 3, 2019 – early voting ends
- November 4, 2019 – last day to apply in person for absentee ballot
- November 4, 2019 – last day to postmark ballot for general election
- November 5, 2019 – last day to deliver absentee ballot in person to Board of Elections
- IF YOU HAVE MOVED WITHIN NYS, YOU DO NOT NEED TO RE- REGISTER. This is a new law, so we recommend that if you move, submit a Voter Registration form with your new information.

ARE YOU GOING AWAY TO COLLEGE?

- If you want to vote in your college election district, you have to register in that district. Go to that state's Board of Elections' website for details. Some states make it difficult to impossible for out of state students to vote.
- To vote in your home district you will need an Absentee Ballot application mailed to your college address. For details: <http://www.elections.ny.gov/VotingAbsentee.html>
 - SEE INFORMATION ABOVE.

DEADLINE TO CHANGE PARTY ENROLLMENT

If you want to change your party enrollment for the **2020 PRIMARY ELECTIONS**, you must fill out a voter registration form by **February 14, 2020**.

TO SEE IF YOU ARE REGISTERED TO VOTE, GO TO: <https://voterlookup.elections.ny.gov/>

IF YOU HAVE A CURRENT NYS DRIVERS LICENCE, YOU CAN REGISTER ONLINE AT:

<https://dmv.ny.gov/more-info/electronic-voter-registration-application>

Need more information?

New York State Board of Elections. 518-474-6220 <http://www.elections.ny.gov/>

[Your local board of elections \(find link and add...\)](#)



Voter Registration Drive: Data Tracking Form

Return this form to the League office at
62 Grand Street, Albany NY 12208
fax to (518) 465-0812
or submit online at lwny.org

Drive Data

	TALLY	TOTAL COUNT
VR Form taken but not completed at table		
Completed Voter Registration		

Drive Logistics

League Name	
Name of person completing this form	
Date of voter registration drive	
Site description (E.g. mall, farmers' market, high school, etc.)	


Register to Vote



LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®

**The League of Women Voters
never supports or opposes
candidates or parties**

Reminder to Vote Cards

 LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS [®]	REMIND ME TO VOTE
MY NAME: _____	
CELLPHONE NUMBER: (_____) _____	
EMAIL ADDRESS: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Remind me for the 2018 General Election
<input type="checkbox"/>	Remind me for subsequent elections
<i>The League of Women Voters never supports or opposes candidates or parties</i>	



THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS
of New York State

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NYS Political Parties at a Glance

*Parties are listed in the order in which they appear on the voter registration form and ballot.
Information provided by each political party.*

Democratic (<https://nydems.org>)

Established in 1792, the NYS Democratic Party is proud to be part of the oldest political party in the US. Its core values align with liberal ideology: ensuring economic opportunities for all, affordable education, criminal justice reform, quality and accessible healthcare, environmental leadership, and guaranteeing LGBTQ and Women's Rights. NYS is the birthplace of the women's rights movement and we continue to lead the fight today.

Republican (<https://nygop.org>)

We are the party of taxpayers and individual liberty. We believe in American exceptionalism, the promise of the American dream and in the Constitution as our enduring covenant. We believe that all are created equal, endowed by their Creator with inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We believe in limited, effective, efficient government that respects taxpayers.

Conservative (<https://www.cpnys.org>)

The NYS Conservative Party, founded in 1962 is dedicated to individual freedom, personal responsibility, the protection of traditional American values of capitalism and the rights that we are all guaranteed under our constitution. To that end, we support lower taxes, smaller government, pro-growth economic policies focused on job creation, a strong national defense and support for law enforcement.

Working Families (<https://workingfamilies.org>)

We elect leaders who put workers over bosses and people over the powerful. We want to build a New York for the many, not the few. One where everyone can thrive, no matter what you look like, where you were born, who you love, or how much money is in your pocket. Where we can all be free.

Green (www.gpny.org)

The Green Party of New York stands on four pillars - ecology, peace, social justice and participatory democracy. The 10 key values place people and planet above profit. The Green Party is both financially and politically independent. The party runs only its own candidates for office and no candidate is allowed to accept corporate donations. For more information visit our website.

Libertarian (<https://lpny.org>)

The fast-growing national party. In NY State, it is dedicated to solutions with limited or no government involvement. Focusing on constitutional principles and a deep respect for the Bill of Rights, the LP is a champion of civil rights, free markets, and self-determination. A principled alternative to the existing two-party system.

Independence (www.independencepartyny.org/)

The Independence Party believes America needs to establish a “third major party.” This new entity would take no stance on polarizing social issues and, unlike the two major parties, would allow candidates to speak directly to the electorate without changing their personal beliefs in return for an endorsement. It would answer the question: what about the rest of us?

SAM - Serve America Movement (<https://joinsam.org>)

The SAM Party of NY is dedicated to electing responsible government leaders who will advance our state and create an inclusive, thriving economy for all New Yorkers. SAM Party candidates will move beyond divisive partisanship to create a high-performing, innovative government that gets results for residents. We advocate for good government policy, competitive elections, and putting people before politics.

8/17/19 2:25 PM

Early Voting 2019

Early Voting – October 26 to November 3, 2019
General Election Day – November 5, 2019

Voting is about to get easier for New Yorkers. New York has long lagged behind most of the country when it comes to voting. During this past legislative session however, many election reform bills were passed, and signed into law. These new laws significantly change the way you can register and vote in New York State. Some reforms have taken effect already, some will take effect in the next year, and two are constitutional amendments that need to be passed by both houses of the legislature after the next statewide election (2020) and then be approved by the voters.

One of the key reforms adopted this year is the provision for early voting across the state.

What does early voting do?

Early voting allows you to vote in person at a poll site within your county for nine (9) days, beginning Saturday, October 26 and continuing through Sunday, November 3. You do not need to have a reason or excuse to vote early.

The poll sites for early voting will not necessarily be your usual poll site location. Each county will determine where the poll sites for early voting will be and the hours each site will be open for voting. Some counties will assign you to a specific poll site during early voting days and other counties will allow you to go to any poll site within the county to vote early. Each county can make this decision and you can see on the county Board of Elections (BOE) website or the state League's website (www.nyearlyvoting.org) where you can vote in your county. A county is required to have one (1) poll site for every fifty thousand (50,000) registered voters, though some counties may have more.

On the General Election Day, November 5th, you must go to your usual assigned poll site to vote.

If you vote in person, during early voting, you are NOT eligible to vote by either absentee ballot, or in person at the polls on General Election Day (November 5th).

www.nyearlyvoting.org

What can I expect at the early voting poll site?

Voting at an early voting poll site may be different from the way you have voted on Election Day. For example, there may be electronic poll books instead of paper registration books. However, you will still be expected to sign in (either on the paper poll book or the electronic poll book), receive a ballot, complete the ballot and feed the ballot into a scanner for counting. A sample ballot should be posted at your poll site.

Do I need to be registered to vote early or can I register at an early voting poll site?

You still must be registered to vote in advance of voting early in NYS. October 11, 2019, is the last day to register to vote in person at your county Board of Elections office or to postmark your voter registration form (which should be mailed to your county Board of Elections office). In NYS, you cannot register to vote during early voting or at the polls on General Election Day. The registration form is available on the NYS BOE website (<https://www.elections.ny.gov/VotingRegister.html#VoteRegForm>), your county Board of Elections office or website, the state League website (<https://www.nyonline.org/advocacy/vote/2019/2019-Voter-Reg-Form.pdf>) or you can register online through the NYS Department of Motor Vehicles at <https://dmv.ny.gov/more-info/electronic-voter-registration-application> if you have an account with DMV (e.g., driver's license, car registration).

How will every polling site have the pollbooks with a list of registered voters?

In some counties, only one poll site will be available for early voting and that may be the county Board of Elections office. In some counties where there is more than one poll site for early voting, you will be assigned to a specific early voting site. (This poll site may be different from your usual poll site where you would vote on November 5, General Election Day.) In other counties, you will be allowed to visit ANY poll site to vote early and at those poll sites, there will likely be electronic poll books which will have all voters in that county listed; and you will sign in by your name on the electronic poll book (computer).

Will the ballot look the same at early voting poll sites and General Election Day poll sites?

Yes, the ballot at an early voting poll site will be identical to the ballot provided on November 5, General Election Day. A sample ballot should be posted at each poll site, but it is also available on the website of your county Board of Elections.

When will my vote be counted if I vote early?

Ballots submitted at an early poll site (October 26 to November 3) will be counted on the General Election Day, November 5. The statute permits counties to begin counting early voting ballots no earlier than 8pm on Tuesday, November 5th.

Can I change my vote if I vote early?

No, once you submit your ballot in person, at an early voting poll site, you cannot vote again at an early voting poll site or at your usual poll site on General Election Day. Once you submit your ballot, you have completed voting and cannot change your vote.

What if my name is not in the paper poll book or electronic poll book?

If you are at an early voting poll site or at your usual poll site on General Election Day, and your name is not in the poll book (either paper book or electronic pollbook), ask to complete an affidavit ballot (sometimes called a provisional ballot). Make sure you are at the correct poll site for your address (either in early voting or on General Election Day), and if so, do not leave without completing an affidavit ballot. After the General Election Day, the county Board of Elections (BOE) office will research your registration and count your affidavit ballot, if you are a qualified voter. You should follow up with a call or visit to your county BOE to confirm that your ballot was counted. In certain counties, including NYC, the BOE will send you a letter advising you whether or not your vote was counted.

What if I moved or am moving during the early voting period?

One of the other reforms passed by the Legislature this year was a statewide voter registration transfer, also known as "Registration Portability." This law requires the Board of Elections to transfer registration and enrollment of a voter appearing on a statewide voter list to wherever the voter moves within the state. So if you move, even to a different county in NYS, and your new county has not been notified of your change of address, you can vote on an affidavit ballot at the poll site of your new address, and your affidavit ballot will be counted once your new address is verified.

As this is a new law, we strongly recommend that if you move, you submit a voter registration form with your new information or visit MyDMV to change your registration online (see above). If you have a driver's license or motor vehicle registration and need to file a form with the Department of Motor Vehicles to change your address, you can notify the Board of Elections of your address change at the same time by checking "yes" for that option on DMV's Form MV-232.

Also, if you go to vote either during early voting or on General Election Day, and your name is not in the poll book, fill out an affidavit ballot. You will be prompted to enter your new address on the affidavit ballot envelope.

OTHER VOTING REFORMS PASSED BY THE LEGISLATURE IN 2019

Bills Signed into Law in 2019

Paid Time Off to Vote

This new law increases from two to three hours the amount of paid time off employees can take to vote. Registered voters may take off up to three hours of working time without loss of pay to vote at any election. Employees shall be allowed time off for voting only at the beginning or end of their working shifts, as the employer may designate unless otherwise mutually agreed. If employees require working time off to vote, they are required to notify their employer not less than two working days before the day of the election that they require time off to vote in accordance with the provisions of this new law.

Primary Consolidation

This election law combines federal and state primaries into **one** primary on the fourth Tuesday in June, eliminating the former primary day in September. This will save New York State money and, hopefully, will improve voter turnout. Primary consolidation also ensures that New York State's election law complies with the federal Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act. Your Annual Voter Notice – a postcard from the county Board of Elections– in most counties will now arrive in your mailbox in April rather than August.

Uniform Polling Hours during Primary Elections

This new law ensures that all New Yorkers will be able to vote from 6:00 am to 9:00 pm during a primary election. In the past, some counties, restricted voting hours in primary elections to the hours from noon to 9:00 pm. Now, all voters across New York State can vote during primaries and general elections from 6:00 am to 9:00 pm.

Bills Taking Effect on January 1, 2020

Online Voter Registration

This new law requires the State Board of Elections to establish and maintain an electronic voter registration system through which applicants may apply to register to vote online.

Preregistration to Vote for 16- and 17-year-olds

This new law allows 16- and 17-year-olds to preregister to vote. The voter registration form will be modified to include space where there is an explanation of preregistration and allow for the form to be pending. The registration will automatically take effect when the person becomes 18-years old. It also requires local boards of education to adopt policies to promote student voter registration and pre-registration. Keep in mind that citizens must still be 18-years old on, or before Election Day, to be eligible to vote.

Bills Passed and Waiting for Governor to Sign (as of August 20, 2019)

Party Enrollment Deadline Change

Currently, voters must change their party enrollment 25 days prior to a General Election Day. With this new law, voters will have until February 14 to decide in which party's primary they would like to vote during the Presidential Primary. The Presidential Primary is usually scheduled

in April; the state and federal primary is scheduled for the fourth Tuesday in June. Any changes in party enrollment made after February 14 will take effect seven (7) days after the June primary.

In New York State, voters can only vote in a primary if they are enrolled in that party. Party enrollment is included in the voter registration form, and voters can change it by submitting a new form to their local county Board of Elections, or online through the NYS Department of Motor Vehicles (if you have a drivers license, Non-Driver ID, car registration, etc.)

Voter Friendly Ballot Act

The Voter Friendly Ballot Act requires changes to New York State ballots so that they will be easier to read, understand, and complete. Among the law's requirements are similar size, and type of font, removal of party emblems, consistent format of candidate listings, and consistent instructions for completion. A simplified and consistent ballot should lead to more accurate voting by voters.

Concurrent resolutions regarding Constitutional Amendments passed (Must be passed again after Assembly & Senate elections in 2020, and then put on the ballot for voter approval.)

Same Day Voter Registration

A bill passed both houses of the state Legislature in January that would allow voters to register and vote on General Election Day. In order for this to become law, the New York State Constitution, which requires registration to vote be completed at least 10-days before General Election Day, must be amended. Changing the Constitution requires the same bill that passed this year be also passed in both the Assembly and Senate in the legislative session following the 2020 General Election, and then be approved by voters when placed on the ballot in 2021. Therefore, the first time this could go into effect would be in 2022. Currently, New Yorkers need to be registered 25 days before General Election Day (10 days required in the state Constitution and an additional 15 days required by statute).

No-Excuse Absentee Ballot Voting

A bill passed both houses of the state Legislature in January that would remove the need for a cause or reason for a voter to vote by absentee ballot. Currently in New York State, you can request an absentee ballot for six reasons: absence from county on General Election Day; temporary illness or physical disability; permanent illness or physical disability; duties related to primary care of individual(s) who are ill or disabled; patient or inmate in VA; or detention in jail/prison awaiting trial, action by grand jury or convicted of crime which is not a felony. You must indicate on the absentee ballot application which of these six reasons prevents you from voting in person on General Election Day.

Currently, 28 states and the District of Columbia allow voters to vote absentee without a cause. No-excuse absentee voting would require a constitutional amendment and could not take place until also passed in both the Assembly and Senate in the legislative session following the 2020 General Election, and then approved by voters when placed on the ballot in 2021.