

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 doesn't 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.

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



WHO CAN VOTE

Can I vote in Alaska?

- You can vote in the November 4 election if you're registered to vote by Sunday, October 5, 2008.
- You can register if you meet **all** of the following qualifications:
 - (1) you're a U.S. citizen;
 - (2) you'll be at least 18 years old by Election Day;
 - (3) you're not currently incarcerated or on probation or parole for certain serious felonies; and
 - (4) you're not registered in any other state.

What if I'm a student?

- You can register to vote at whatever address you regard as your primary legal residence. This can be your school address or your home address.

What if I've been convicted of a crime?

- If you were convicted of a misdemeanor, you can vote, but you have to vote by absentee ballot if you're still in jail.

- If you were convicted of certain serious felonies in a state or federal court, you can vote if you're not currently incarcerated or on probation or parole. Your right to vote is automatically restored when you complete your sentence, but you have to include a copy of your discharge papers with your voter registration application.

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).

REGISTRATION

How do I register?

- You can register to vote:
 - (1) **in person**, by filling out a voter registration form at your Division of Elections office;
 - (2) **by mail or fax**, by filling out a mail-in voter registration form and mailing or faxing it to your local Division of Elections office; or

- (3) **when you apply for services** at the Department of Motor Vehicles or 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.

- You can get mail-in voter registration forms from your local Division of Elections office, from most libraries, colleges and high schools, or online at <http://www.elections.state.ak.us/regapp.php>.

What's the registration deadline?

- Sunday, October 5

What if I miss the deadline?

- You won't be able to vote in the November 4 election, but you can register to vote in future elections.

What if I've moved or changed my name?

- You have to transfer your registration to your new precinct whenever you move. If you moved before the deadline, and didn't transfer your registration, you can vote a questioned ballot in your new precinct. AS § 15.07.090.

- If you change your name, you can still vote under your old name. But if you want to vote under your new name, you'll have to vote a questioned ballot if you don't re-register. AS § 15.07.090.

How do I know if I'm registered?

- You can check your registration status by calling your city or borough clerk's office.

VOTING EARLY

Can I vote before Election Day?

- Yes. Any registered voter can vote before Election Day by casting an absentee ballot or by casting a ballot in person at an early voting center.

How do I get an absentee ballot?

- You have to submit an application no later than 10 days before Election Day if you're already registered to vote. If you're not already registered, your application and registration must be received or postmarked at least 30 days before Election Day. You can apply to vote absentee in person, by mail, or by fax, scanning, or other electronic transmission, and you can download an application at <http://www.elections.alaska.gov/forms/c06.pdf>.

What's the deadline for returning my absentee ballot?

- To be counted, your absentee ballot must be received or postmarked no later than the close of the polls on Election Day.

VOTING ON ELECTION DAY

When is Election Day?

- Tuesday, November 4

When are the polls open?

- Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. You have the right to vote if you're in line or inside your polling place when the polls close. AS § 15.15.320.

Can I get time off from work to vote?

- Maybe. If your work schedule doesn't include two consecutive hours during which you're off and could vote while the polls are open, you have the right to take enough time off from work, with pay, as you need to vote. You should try to give your employer notice in advance if you need to take off work to vote.

Where do I vote?

- On Election Day, you have to vote at the polling place to which you're assigned.
- Your assigned polling place will be listed on the voter ID card that you should receive in the mail when you register.

- If you don't have your card, you can call Alaska's polling place locator at 1-888-383-8683 or look up your polling place online at <http://www.elections.alaska.gov/polling.php>.

What if my polling place is not accessible?

- If you find this out before Election Day, call your Regional Elections Office right away and ask for an accommodation. You have the right to an accessible polling place and an accessible voting machine. Or, if you prefer, you can request a special needs ballot which can be brought to your home by a personal representative.

- On Election Day, you can bring up to two people to assist you, or you can ask the election judge at the poll to assist you. You have the right to get help from anyone you choose as long as the person is not your employer, an agent of your employer, or an officer or agent of your labor union. AS § 15.15.240

Can I get a ballot in my native language?

- Some boroughs and census areas in Alaska are required to provide language assistance in Alaskan, Aleutian, American Indian, Athabascan, Chickasaw, Eskimo, Filipino, and Yup'ik, as well as other American Indian and Alaska native languages. Contact your local Division of Elections office before Election Day to find out what's available in your area. Poll workers in places where language assistance is required should offer this assistance to you. If they don't, tell a poll worker that you want assistance in one of these languages. You're entitled to language assistance with all ballots and other election materials.

■ **ALASKA DIVISION OF ELECTIONS:**
(907) 465-4611

■ **U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE:**
(800) 253-3931

■ **ACLU VOTING RIGHTS PROJECT:**
(877) 523-2792
<http://www.votingrights.org>

■ **ACLU OF ALASKA:**
(907) 276-2258



125 BROAD STREET 18TH FLOOR
NEW YORK, NY 10004-2400

■ Even if assistance in your language isn't required or available where you vote, you still have the right to bring a translator with you to the polls or to get assistance in your language 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 need help in the voting booth?

■ If you need help because of a physical disability or because you can't read the ballot, tell a poll worker when you get to your polling place. You have the right to have up to two people you choose assist you in the voting booth, including an election judge, as long as the assistant is not your employer, an agent of your employer, or an officer or agent of your labor union. AS § 15.15.240.

■ If you need instructions on how to use the voting equipment, ask a poll worker for help. Poll workers are required to help you at any time you ask—even after you've entered the voting booth.

VOTER ID

Do I have to show ID?

■ Probably. Alaska law requires all voters to show some form of identification before receiving a ballot. An election official at the polls can waive this requirement, however, if he or she knows who you are and you're not a first-time voter in Alaska who registered by mail and didn't provide any identification when you registered. AS § 15.15.225.

What are the accepted forms of ID?

■ Accepted forms of ID include an official voter registration card, driver's license, state identification card, current and valid photo identification, birth certificate, passport, or hunting or fishing license; or an original or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, government check, or other government document. Your ID must show your name and current address. AS § 15.15.225.

What if I don't have any ID?

■ If you know any of the election officials at your polling place, ask one of them to waive the ID requirement for you. You can cast a regular ballot if the ID requirements for first-time voters don't apply to you

and an election official knows who you are. AS § 15.15.225

■ Otherwise, ask for a questioned ballot. You can cast a questioned ballot without ID, but that ballot won't be counted unless you bring your ID to the local elections office before the close of business on Thursday, November 6. If you have time and have ID at home or work, it's usually better to get your ID and return to the polls to cast a regular ballot.

PROBLEMS AT THE POLLS

What if I'm not on the voter list?

■ First, ask a pollworker to check the list again and to confirm that you're at the right polling place for your address.

■ If you're at the right polling place but your name isn't on the voter list, ask for a questioned ballot. You have the right to cast a questioned ballot even if your name isn't on the voter list. AS § 15.07.010; § 15.15.198.

What if I go to the wrong polling place?

■ Go to the right polling place. You can ask a poll worker to help you find the polling place where you're

registered. You can also call your local elections office or look up your polling place online at <http://www.elections.alaska.gov/polling.php>.

■ If you can't figure out where you're registered, go the polling place that you think is most likely to be the right one and ask for a questioned ballot. You have the right to cast a questioned ballot even if you're not sure that you're at the right polling place. AS § 15.07.010.

What if someone challenges my right to vote?

■ Ask for a questioned ballot. You are entitled to vote a questioned ballot if you sign a statement swearing that you believe that you're qualified to vote. AS § 15.15.210. Election officials will rule on the challenge before the election results become final.

What if someone tries to intimidate or harass me?

■ Tell a poll worker right away. If the poll worker is the problem, tell a poll watcher, call your local elections office, call one of the election hotline numbers listed at the end of this card, or make a complaint online at <http://www.votingrights.org>.

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 up to three replacement ballots as long as you catch your mistake before you cast your ballot. AS § 15.15.250.

How do I make a complaint?

■ First, ask for an election supervisor at your polling place. He or she can handle most routine complaints that arise on Election Day. Candidates, political parties, and nonprofit groups may also have poll watchers at your polling place 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 local Division of Elections office.

■ You can also call one of the election hotline numbers listed at the end of this card or make a complaint online at <http://www.votingrights.org>.

TIPS FOR AVOIDING PROBLEMS

■ Check your voter registration status at least 30 days before the election.

■ Vote before Election Day, using early voting or absentee voting, if you're eligible to do so.

■ If you plan to vote at the polls, locate your polling place at least 30 days before the election.

■ Vote early in the day to avoid the last-minute rush.

■ Bring some form of identification.

■ Read all instructions carefully.

■ Ask for help if you need it.

■ Take your time.

2008 ALASKA VOTER EMPOWERMENT CARD



ALASKA