

WHO CAN VOTE

Can I vote in Georgia?

■ You can vote in the November 2 election if you're registered to vote by Monday, October 4, 2010.

■ 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;
- (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 legal residence. This can be either 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 a felony in Georgia, you can vote if you've completed your sentence (including incarceration, parole, probation, and all fines, fees, and restitution).

■ If you haven't yet been convicted of a crime, but you're in jail awaiting a trial or other proceeding, you can vote by absentee ballot.

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).

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. O.C.G.A. § 21-2-218(d)

■ If you moved to a new county before October 4 and didn't re-register, you can't vote in this election.

■ If you moved within the State after October 4, you can vote at your old polling place. O.C.G.A. § 21-2-218(e)

■ If you moved across state lines after October 4, contact your local elections officials to figure out where and how to vote.

What if I miss the deadline?

■ You won't be able to vote in the November 2 election, but you can register to vote in other future elections.

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://www.sos.georgia.gov/mvp> or by calling your county board of registrars.

VOTING EARLY

Can I vote before Election Day?

■ Yes. Any registered voter can vote before Election Day by absentee ballot or advance in-person voting. You don't need an excuse.

What's advance voting?

■ Advance voting allows any registered voter to vote in person at special advance voting locations beginning in late September.

■ Contact your county board of registrars for the location and hours of an advance voting location near you.

How do I get an absentee ballot?

■ You have to submit an application by mail, by fax, by email, or by hand no later than Friday, October 29. You can get an application from your county board of registrars or you can download one at http://sos.georgia.gov/Elections/absentee_voting.htm.

What's the deadline for returning my absentee ballot?

■ To be counted, your absentee ballot must be received by the registrar or absentee clerk in your county no later than 7 p.m. on Election Day.

VOTING ON ELECTION DAY

When is Election Day?

■ Tuesday, November 2

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. O.C.G.A. § 21-2-413(g)

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 with pay) 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. O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-404

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 registration card that you should receive in the mail when you register.

■ If you don't have your card, you can look up your polling place online at <http://www.sos.ga.gov/mvp> or contact your county board of registrars to find out where to vote.

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 in casting your ballot. Examples include a sample ballot, a voter guide, or this card. But 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. O.C.G.A. § 21-2-414(a-b)

What if my polling place is not accessible?

■ If you find this out before Election Day, notify your county board of registrars 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 vote by absentee ballot or advance voting.

■ Otherwise, you have the right to have anyone you choose assist you as long as the person is not your employer, an agent of your employer, or an officer or agent of your labor union. O.C.G.A. § 21-2-409(a)-(b)

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. O.C.G.A. § 21-2-409(a)

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 also have the right to have anyone you choose assist you in the voting booth, 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. O.C.G.A. § 21-2-409(a)

■ 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. O.C.G.A. § 21-2-410

VOTER ID

Do I have to show ID?

- Yes. You must show some form of identification in order to vote.

What are the accepted forms of ID?

- Accepted forms of ID include:

- (1) a Georgia driver's license, even if it's expired, or a Georgia voter ID card;
- (2) a valid Georgia state or federal ID card (with photo);
- (3) a valid U.S. passport;
- (4) a valid U.S. military ID card (with photo);
- (5) a valid government-issued employee ID card (with photo); and
- (6) a valid tribal ID card (with photo).

- If you're a first-time voter who registered by mail and didn't include a copy of your ID with your voter registration application, the accepted forms of ID also include a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or any other government document that shows your name and address. O.C.G.A. § 21-2-417(c)

What if I don't have any ID?

- You can cast a provisional ballot, but that ballot won't be counted unless you bring ID to your county registrar's office before the close of business on Friday, November 5. 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.
- 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 isn't on the voter list, as long as you're willing to swear that you believe you registered to vote. O.C.G.A. § 21-2-418(a)-(b)

What if I go to the wrong polling place?

- Go to the right polling place. You can ask a pollworker to help you find the polling place where you're registered. You can also call your county board of registrars' office or look up your polling place online at <http://www.sos.ga.gov/mvp>.
- 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 for your address and ask for a provisional ballot. You have the right to cast a provisional ballot even if you're not sure that you're at the right polling place. O.C.G.A. § 21-2-418(a)

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. O.C.G.A. § 21-2-230(i)

What if someone tries to intimidate or harass me?

- You should report the incident to the chief manager of the polling place. You can also tell a poll watcher, call your board of registrars, call one of the election hotline numbers listed below.

What if I make a mistake on my ballot or the voting machine malfunctions?

- Tell a poll worker before you cast your vote. If your voting machine malfunctions, you can request a different machine or a paper ballot. O.C.G.A. § 21-2-418(h)

How do I make a complaint?

- First, ask for the chief manager at your polling place. Candidates, political parties, and nonprofit groups may also have pollwatchers 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 county board of registrars or the Secretary of State.
- You can also call one of the election hotline numbers below.

Georgia State Elections Division:

(404) 656-2871

<http://sos.georgia.gov/elections/>

U.S. Department of Justice:

(800) 253-3931

ACLU Voting Rights Project:

(877) 523-2792

ACLU of Georgia:

(770) 303-9966



GEORGIA VOTER EMPOWERMENT CARD

2010 ELECTIONS



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.

QUICK TIPS FOR VOTING:

- Check your voter registration status at least 30 days before the election.
- Vote before Election Day - using advance or absentee voting.
- 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 at least one form of photo identification.
- Read all instructions carefully.
- Ask for help if you need it.
- Take your time.

