Disclaimer: This guide is designed for informational purposes only. It is not legal advice and is not intended to create an attorney-client relationship. The Election Protection Coalition does not warrant any information contained in this guide, nor does the Coalition suggest that the information in this guide should be used as a basis to pursue legal advice or decision-making.

Note: This FAQ is not exhaustive. Situations or inquiries may arise that are not answered below. In those circumstances, contact your hotline captain or command center for assistance. Please make sure to record all of the voter’s contact information should follow-up be necessary.

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1. Am I registered to vote?

A voter can determine whether he or she is registered to vote by checking the Illinois State Board of Elections’ website (http://ova.elections.il.gov/RegistrationLookup.aspx). If a voter is not yet registered, he or she can still register before or even on Election Day. Refer to Question #4 for more details.

2. Where do I vote?


3. When do the polls open and close?

The polls must be open from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Election Day.1 If you are a hotline volunteer or a field volunteer and a polling place is not open at 6:00 a.m., advise voters to stay at
the polling location and contact your hotline captain/command center. A voter in line at the polling place by 7:00 p.m. must be allowed to vote. If you are a hotline volunteer or a field volunteer and a polling place prohibits those who were in line before 7:00 pm from voting, advise voters to stay at the polling location and contact your hotline captain/command center.

4. When is/was the voter registration deadline?

A voter may register any time before or even on Election Day. If a voter is registering by mail, their application must be postmarked by the 28th day before an election, which will be October 9, 2018 for this general election.

After these deadlines, a voter may use “Grace Period Registration” to register to vote (see http://www.elections.il.gov/downloads/electioninformation/pdf/graceperiodreg.pdf). In general, a voter using this process must register in person at a location designated by the election authority and, during the same visit, vote at the site of registration. After this election, the voter can vote in her or his normal polling place. Look up the local elections office’s website (https://www.elections.il.gov/ElectionAuthorities/ElecAuthorityList.aspx) to obtain specific Grace Period Registration dates and locations.

On Election Day, a voter may still register to vote, as Election Day Registration (EDR) is available in every county in Illinois. In Cook, DuPage, Lake, Kane, Will, Kendall, and other counties with at least 100,000 people and all counties with electronic poll books, Election Day registration (EDR) will be available at each polling place (there are 20 counties [http://www.us-places.com/Illinois/population-by-County.htm] that fit this description). All other low-population counties (less than 100,000 people) are required to have EDR in at least the election authority’s main office and one site in each city with at least 20% of the county’s population. Go to www.clccrul.org/voting-rights-project or contact your county’s election authority (find yours at https://www.elections.il.gov/ElectionAuthorities/ElecAuthorityList.aspx) to find out where EDR is being offered in that county.

5. Can I vote without providing identification?

In general, voters in Illinois do NOT have to provide identification at the polling place in order to vote a regular ballot. There are exceptions to this:

- Voters using Election Day registration (EDR) or a first-time voter who registered by mail but did not submit sufficient proof of identity with the registration application must present two of the following IDs the first time they vote, and at least one of them must contain the person’s current address (or, in the case of homeless voters, a mailing address used by the voter):
  - Illinois driver’s license or state ID card;

Brown, Bureau, Champaign, Cook (Chicago and suburban Cook County), DeKalb, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, La Salle, Macon, Madison, McHenry, McLean, Peoria, Rock Island, Sangamon, Stark, St. Clair, Tazewell, Will, and Winnebago offer EDR in each polling place.
- Employee or student ID;
- Credit card;
- Social Security card;
- Birth certificate;
- Utility bill in the voter’s name;
- Mail postmarked to the voter;
- Valid U.S. passport;
- Public assistance ID card (such as Illinois Link card); or
- Lease or rental contract.

- If a voter’s qualifications are challenged, the voter may be required to produce two forms of identification showing her current residential address, including not more than one piece of mail addressed to the voter at her current residence address and postmarked not earlier than 30 days prior to the date of the election. Alternatively, voters may have a witness who is registered to vote in that precinct attest to the voter’s qualifications and take an oath. The voter may then cast a regular ballot.\(^4\)

- Some jurisdictions may require that the voter present two forms of identification if she is on the inactive voter list.

If a voter is unable to show identification when required—if the voter registered by mail without providing identification, was successfully challenged, is on the inactive list, or is using EDR—the voter technically may vote by provisional ballot.\(^5\) However, a voter should be encouraged to go back and get an ID before entering the polls rather than cast a provisional ballot, because provisional ballots are not always counted promptly.

6. I have moved and I didn’t update my voter registration, can I vote?

In most instances, the best option is for the individual to use grace period or Election Day registration (EDR). This will allow her to change her address to reflect her current residence and vote the correct ballot for where she currently lives. Chicago voters can check their current voter registration status and other information about registration at http://www.chicagoelections.com/info. Suburban Cook County voters can check www.cookcountyclerk.com. Illinois voters can check ova.elections.il.gov/registrationlookup.aspx and look up their county.

See Question #4 for more details on using grace period or Election Day registration. If grace period or Election Day registration options are not possible for the voter due to timing or location, the person might still be able to vote, depending on when the voter moved and where the voter moved. Refer to the table below:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moved within 30 days of Election Day</th>
<th>Moved to a different precinct but within the same election jurisdiction†</th>
<th>Moved to a different election jurisdiction‡</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Moved within 30 days of Election Day</strong></td>
<td>The voter may use grace period or Election Day registration to update their info and vote on the same day, at the polling place for their current address (in Chicago, Cook County, and certain other places) or another designated location. See Question #4 for more details on location. <strong>Or</strong> if that isn’t feasible, the voter can complete an address correction form at the polling place for their old address and cast a full ballot for that old address.⁷</td>
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Question #4 for more details on location.

Or if that isn’t feasible, the voter can complete an address correction form at the polling place for their old address and cast a ballot for only federal offices. In practical terms, some voters in this situation vote at the precinct for their old address and then update their registration after the election.

7. What should I do if there are equipment problems at my precinct?

Voters should immediately notify the election judges (poll workers) if the voting equipment breaks down. If the problem cannot be fixed in a timely manner, a voter should ask for an emergency paper ballot to cast her or his vote. This is different from a provisional ballot, and they are entitled to it by law. They should not cast a provisional ballot, because provisional ballots are not always counted promptly. If voting equipment is not functional, contact 866-OUR-VOTE or your call center captain or command center. They will then contact local elections officials to attempt to resolve the issue.

8. I am a registered voter who is not on the rolls at my precinct. Can I vote where I am?

If a voter is not found on the rolls of the polling place where the voter is attempting to vote, the precinct must call the Office of the Board of Elections in that jurisdiction, which has access to the statewide database, to make sure the voter is registered and is in the correct precinct. If the voter is found, she should be able to vote a regular ballot.

If the voter is not found, but is at the correct precinct, and the precinct offers Election Day registration (EDR), and the voter has the required documentation (two IDs including one with current address), then the voter can use Election Day registration and vote a regular ballot. If that precinct does not offer EDR, go to www.clcrul.org/voting-rights-project or the website of the voter’s jurisdiction (https://www.elections.il.gov/ElectionAuthorities/ElecAuthorityList.aspx) to
find out where EDR is being offered in that county; ask the voter if she can make it there before polls close. See Question #4 for more details on locations for EDR.

If the voter is not on the rolls, is in the correct precinct, and cannot use EDR for lack of ID or time/distance, the voter can vote by provisional ballot. This is a last resort, because provisional ballots will not always be counted promptly. Provisional ballots will be counted only if the election jurisdiction can later verify that the voter was properly registered, and they often will not be counted on Election Day.

9. My name isn’t popping up on the list of registered voters – could it have been removed?

A voter’s name can be removed from the list of registered voters if the voter has not voted in the past four years (after receiving notice) or if the voter is currently serving a sentence for a criminal conviction. If the voter has not voted in four years, the election authority must provide them with notice before taking any action; if she failed to respond within 30 days, her name was likely removed. Situations also arise where a voter’s name is mistakenly removed from the rolls or a voter encounters other problems, even though that voter never received proper notification of removal, because election authorities confused the voter with another person with similar identifying information. If the voter would like to have her name put back on the rolls, she can send that request via letter to the election jurisdiction (such as the county clerk or Board of Elections) within two years of cancellation with documentation that she is a qualified voter; after that two-year period, she must re-register. If a voter’s name has been removed from the rolls, suggest that the voter use grace period or Election Day registration (see Question #4) or offer to call the jurisdiction with the voter in an attempt to resolve the situation if time allows. Otherwise, provide the jurisdiction’s phone number to the voter.

10. I have a criminal conviction. Can I vote?

Many individuals with a past criminal conviction are interested in voting, but many do not know that they have the right to vote or how to exercise that right. The only people in Illinois who CANNOT vote because of their criminal record are people who:

• Are in prison or jail serving a sentence after conviction for any crime;
• Are on furlough from prison or jail;
• Are in an Adult Transition Center; or
• Are on work-release (or periodic imprisonment) from prison or jail.

However, others who have been convicted of a crime CAN vote, including people convicted of felony crimes but who are not currently serving a sentence, people on probation or parole, people who have been arrested or charged with a crime but have not been convicted, and people who are in jail before their trial.

After a person has served their sentence and is released from incarceration, they are again eligible to vote and you should check whether they are registered. Refer to Question #1 for more details on checking a voter’s registration. If a voter was registered to vote before he or she went to prison or jail, the name might have been removed from the rolls, and the voter might need to
register again. Additionally, if the person’s name or address has changed since the last time he or she voted, the registration might need to be updated. See Question #6 for more details on updating voter registration.

11. I have been offered a provisional ballot. What should I do?

**Voters should use provisional ballots only as a last resort.** Provisional ballots will be counted only if the election authority can later verify that the voter was properly registered.19 Provisional ballots often will not be counted on Election Day. Inquire why the voter was offered a provisional ballot and encourage the voter to take steps to be able to cast a regular ballot. If the voter is not correctly registered, the voter should be offered the opportunity to do grace period (or Election Day) registration (see Question #4) before being offered a provisional ballot.

The voter should be offered a provisional ballot only when:

- The voter’s voting status has been successfully challenged;
- It is the voter’s first time voting in that precinct, she did not provide identification when registering by mail, she does not have sufficient ID with her at the polling place, and she is unable to go back to retrieve ID and return to the polling place;
- There is a dispute about whether the poll should be open at that time, for example if parties are in the process of obtaining a court order extending the time for closing the polls;
- The voter’s name appears on the list of voters who voted during the early voting period, even though the voter claims not to have voted during the early voting period; or
- The voter received a mail-in (absentee) ballot but did not return the mail-in (absentee) ballot to the election authority and was not able to vote through the procedures mentioned in Question #17.

Other than for these reasons, the voter should be able to cast a regular ballot. **A provisional ballot should be a last resort.** An individual found eligible to cast a provisional official ballot may do so after signing an affidavit stating that the individual is an eligible voter in the jurisdiction. A voter can check here to see if her provisional ballot was counted: https://www.elections.il.gov/VotingInformation/ProvBallotSearch.aspx.

12. I am a college student. Can I register vote where I go to school?

Yes. College students may vote at their school, provided that they have been an Illinois resident for at least 30 days. A student may consider themselves a resident of Illinois if the student is physically present in the state and intends to remain at their current residence (this does not mean that the student intends to remain at the address forever).20 If a student considers two locations their residence, the student may choose one.21 Students must be held to the same eligibility requirements as any other voter in the jurisdiction. If a student is told that he or she is not able to vote at their school, volunteers should ascertain if they have fulfilled all of the registration requirements (i.e. citizenship, age, and durational residency requirements) and that they have properly registered for this election and tried grace period registration or Election Day registration (EDR) if necessary. Otherwise, call 866-OUR-VOTE or alert the command center or call center captain so that they can contact the appropriate election official.
13. I am physically disabled and need assistance. Will my polling place be accessible?

Illinois law requires that each polling place be accessible to disabled voters unless granted an exemption by the State Board of Elections, but in reality many polling places are not sufficiently accessible. A voter who has a disability and is assigned to an inaccessible polling place is entitled, upon previous request, to be provided a ballot up to 50 feet from the entrance to the inaccessible polling place (often called “curbside voting”). Some jurisdictions may provide curbside voting without an advance request. The voter should attempt to obtain access even if they have failed to request curbside voting in advance. Field volunteers should alert their command center or field captain, who can then work to contact the relevant election official to report the problem.

14. I am blind, physically disabled, or cannot read English and require assistance in order to vote. Can I get assistance at the polls?

Yes. Any voter who needs assistance voting is entitled to have the person of his or her choice, other than the voter’s employer, an agent of the employer, or an officer or agent of the voter’s union, mark the voter’s choices or assist the voter in marking his or her choices on the ballot. The person providing assistance can be a friend or family member, for example, and the assister is not required to be a registered voter. The assister might be required to fill out an affidavit form provided by the election judge/poll worker. There might be situations where the voter wants an election judge/poll worker to serve as an assister, especially if a voter has limited English proficiency. This might be a workable solution, as long as the voter makes the choices and the assister merely marks the choices made by the voter.

In many jurisdictions, including Chicago, Cook County, Lake County, and Kane County, the federal Voting Rights Act requires polling places to provide written translations and oral interpretation (bilingual election judges/poll workers) in Spanish. In parts of Cook County and the City of Chicago, written and oral assistance is required in Chinese. In parts of Cook County and the City of Chicago, written assistance is required in Hindi and oral assistance is required in Hindi, Gujarati, and Urdu. DuPage County was previously required to provide assistance in Spanish and often still voluntarily provides Spanish assistance. In many jurisdictions, even if no assistance is available in person, election judges/poll workers are able to call their central election office to help a voter obtain language assistance over the phone. If you need more details about language requirements and resources in a specific location, check with 866-OUR-VOTE, 888-VE-Y-VOTA, 888-API-VOTE, 844-YALLA-US, or the call center captain, field captain, or command center.

15. I don’t know how to use the voting equipment. Can I get help?

Before using the voting machine, a voter can request that an election judge/poll worker provide instructions on how to use the machine. An instruction model for each mechanically-operated machine can also be provided, showing a portion of the face of the voting machine. After
giving instructions to the voter, the poll worker must leave the booth so that the voter can vote confidentially. See Question #14 for information about assistance in the booth.

16. Can I vote absentee or vote in person before election day?

There are three types of voting options before Election Day in Illinois:

1) Early Voting (also called one-stop absentee voting or in-person absentee voting): Registered voters may go in person to their county board of elections office (or an alternative location announced by the election jurisdiction) to vote. The period for early voting varies by local election jurisdiction and may extend to November 5. You can look up the locations and times of early voting polling places on the State Board of Elections website at http://www.elections.il.gov/votinginformation/earlyvotinglocations.aspx. Early voting might be more convenient for some voters and may offer reduced waiting times.

2) Voting by mail (formerly called “absentee” voting): Any registered Illinois voter can request a mail-in ballot. No special circumstances or excuses are necessary. Voters can obtain a mail-in ballot application on the State Board of Elections website (http://www.elections.il.gov/VotingInformation/VotingByMail.aspx), the State Board of Elections office, or at local election authority offices (in most cases, the county clerk). For the 2018 general election, the application for a mail-in ballot must be received by your local election board’s office by November 1. A completed application for a mail-in ballot can be mailed, e-mailed, faxed, or delivered in person to the local election authority. The actual mail-in ballot must be mailed. Mailed ballots must be received by the election authority by Election Day or postmarked by Election Day. To ensure that a ballot will be counted, advise the voter to have the local post office apply a postmark date on the return envelope.


17. What if I requested an absentee/mail-in ballot but I want to vote in person on Election Day?

If the voter wants to vote in person at the polling place, she can vote a regular ballot if she brings the mail-in (absentee) ballot that came in the mail or signs an affidavit stating that (A) the voter never received a mail-in (absentee) ballot or (B) the voter completed and returned a mail-in (absentee) ballot and was informed that the election authority did not receive that ballot. Voters should attempt to use a regular ballot and only vote a provisional ballot as a last resort.

18. Does my state have Same Day Registration/Election Day Registration? If so, what is the process?
Yes, as mentioned in Question #4 above, Election Day registration (EDR) is allowed by Illinois law. In all counties, EDR is required to be available in at least one location within the county, and in high-population counties (including Cook County) and counties with electronic poll books, EDR is available in each polling place; specific details about locations are described in Question #4 above and at www.clcrul.org/voting-rights-project. Voters using EDR need to present two forms of ID, including one with a current address.

19. Am I automatically registered to vote?

Automatic Voter Registration (AVR), Public Act 100-0464, was passed into law in 2017, but it is still in the early stages of implementation. For the November 6, 2018 election, voters should check their registration and, if needed, register to vote or update their registration.

20. What rules apply to people campaigning or “hanging around” my polling place? Can people approach me?

Candidates, campaigns, and partisan pollwatchers may try to pressure voters inside the polling place, but such actions are not permitted and should be reported to election judges/poll workers. Electioneering and “soliciting of votes” are banned within 100 feet of all polling places. Furthermore, “no person shall interrupt, hinder or oppose any voter while approaching within those areas for the purpose of voting.” The 100-foot radius should be marked with cones, a United States flag, or other markers. The area within the markers is designated a “campaign free zone.” Churches or private schools may designate their entire property as “campaign free.” The area on polling place property that is outside of the “campaign free zone” is a public forum for the duration of time that the polling place is open, and electioneering (including placement of signs) is allowed.

Pollwatchers (who may be there on behalf of a candidate) may not “station themselves in such close proximity to the judges of election so as to interfere with the orderly conduct of the election and shall not, in any event, be permitted to handle election materials.”

Improper electioneering should be reported to 866-OUR-VOTE, call center captains, field captains, or the command center when needed, so that relevant election authorities can be alerted.

21. Someone is formally challenging my right to vote. What do I do?

If a voter’s qualifications are challenged in a legitimate manner, the voter may be required to produce two forms of identification showing her current residential address, including not more than one piece of mail addressed to the voter at her current residence address and postmarked not earlier than 30 days prior to the date of the election. See Question #5. Alternatively, voters may have a witness who is registered to vote in that precinct attest to the voter’s qualifications and take an oath. The voter may then cast a regular ballot. As a last resort, a voter may cast a provisional ballot. See Question #11 for more information about provisional ballots. If it seems like a particular voter or group of voters might have been targeted or challenged unfairly, this issue should be reported to 866-OUR-VOTE, call center captains, field captains, or the command center, so that the relevant election authorities can be alerted.
1 10 ILCS 5/18-2.
3 10 ILCS 5/4-50; 10 ILCS 5/5-50.
4 10 ILCS 5/17-10.
5 10 ILCS 5/18A-5.
8 Id.
9 Id.
10 Id.
11 Id.
12 10 ILCS 5/24-11.
14 See 10 ILCS 5/5-24; Ill. Admin. Code tit. 26, § 216.50
15 See 10 ILCS 5/5-24.
16 Id.
17 10 ILCS 5/3-5.
18 Id.
19 10 ILCS 5/18A-5.
22 10 ILCS 5/11-4.2(a).
23 10 ILCS 5/17-13(b).
25 Id.; see also McCreery v. Burnsmier, 293 Ill. 43, 51, 127 N.E. 171, 175 (1920)
26 10 ILCS 5/24-10.
27 Id.
28Id.
30 10 ILCS 5/19-1.
31 10 ILCS 5/20-8.
32 10 ILCS 5/18-5.
34 10 ILCS 5/17-29
35 Id.
36 Id.
37 Id.
38 Id.
39 Id.
40 10 ILCS 5/7-34; 10 ILCS 5/17-23
41 10 ILCS 5/17-10.