

Frequently Asked Questions

We hope that you will take a moment to review these pages, as you may find the answers to questions of your own. We encourage you to explore our website for more detailed information on elections and voting in Texas. We hope you find this useful, and we appreciate this opportunity to serve you.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQS) and Other Popular Topics

Note: We have grouped questions and answers in categories and provided links to additional information when needed.

Checking Voter Registration Status, Getting Registered for the First Time, or Making Changes to Your Current Registration

Q: I'm not sure if I'm registered; how can I confirm my voter registration status?

A: You can confirm your registration status on this website by going to [Am I Registered?](#), where you will select one of three methods for conducting your search. You can base your search on: 1. your Voter Unique Identifier (VUID), which appears on your voter registration certificate; 2. your Texas driver's license number, if you provided it when you applied for voter registration; or 3. your first and last name. Or, you can call the voter registrar's office in the county where you reside. To find the number, [review the list of County Voter Registration Officials](#).

Q: I'm not registered, but want to vote in the May Election; how can I be sure that I'm registered in time to vote?

A: The deadline to register and be eligible to vote in the May 8, General Election is **April 8, 2010**. This can be either the postmark date or the date the application is received in the office of the voter registrar in Hays County. You may, of course, register at any time before that date to ensure that your registration is effective for voting in May. You can obtain a voter registration application from your voter registrar's office, libraries, most post offices, high schools, or from this office.

- [To request a postage-paid voter registration application](#) (you may also download an informal application at the Secretary of State's website)
- [Addresses and phone numbers of Voter Registrars](#)

Q: If I send my registration by the deadline, what happens next?

A: Your voter registration becomes effective 30 days after it is submitted (and accepted*) by the county voter registrar in Hays County. The county office will then put your name on the voter registration list, generate your voter certificate and mail it to you. Once received, be sure to read the information on the back of the certificate, sign by the X on the "front" of the card (the blue area) and keep your voter card in a safe place. This is what you will take with you to the polls to vote. Note that as long as your name is on the voter list, you may vote without presenting this certificate, as discussed below under "Voting without a Certificate."

*If your original application is missing required information, you will receive a notice in the mail and have a deadline to respond to the notice.

Q: I am registered to vote, but I moved this past year. Is there anything I need to do to make sure that I won't have a problem voting in May?

A: If you moved “**within the same county**” where you are currently registered, you must file the new address information in writing with your voter registrar OR [you may submit the ‘in county’ change online](#). The last day to make a change of address that will be effective for the May election is **April 8, 2010**. If you miss this deadline, you may return to your old precinct to vote. You will be required to complete a "statement of residence" confirming your new address in your new precinct.

A: If you moved to a “**new county**,” you must re-register in your new county of residence by **April 8, 2010** to be eligible to vote in the May 8, 2010 Election.

- [Addresses and phone numbers of Voter Registrars](#).

Q: I don't remember seeing my certificate lately. Is that a problem? Don't I just stay registered?

A: New certificates are mailed out every two years to the most recent address you gave to the voter registrar. If you do not recall receiving a new blue and white certificate in early 2010, it could mean that you have moved without updating, or there is some other problem with your registration. If the certificate was mailed to an old address, it was returned to the registrar, and you were placed on the "suspense list" in that county. This means you have a grace period that allows you to vote in the same county in your old precinct, but if you do not vote, your name will be removed from the rolls after two federal elections have passed since you were placed on the suspense list. If you did not receive your certificate because you moved to a new Texas county, you will need to re-register.

Q: I am reviewing this page and nothing makes sense to me. These are not the rules I have heard. I'm in Connecticut -- does that matter?

- **A:** If you are visiting our website from another state, please remember that each state has slightly different rules. These rules describe Texas state law, for voters who consider their permanent home to be in Texas and want to vote a Texas ballot. If you arrived at this page through a search engine and you need another state's election law, check the [National Association of Secretaries of State](#) page for other state websites.

Voting Without a Certificate - Voting Early - Election Day Voting

Q: I can't find my voter certificate/card. Will I be able to vote without it?

A: If you are a registered voter and you have lost or misplaced your voter certificate, you may vote without your certificate by providing some form of identification (see list below) and signing an affidavit at the polls. This is the procedure to follow if your voter registration is still current and your name appears on the voter rolls in your county of residence. You may also contact your county voter registrar to obtain a replacement certificate. [Addresses and phone numbers of Voter Registrars](#)

Acceptable documents are:

1. a driver's license or personal identification card issued to you by the Department of Public Safety or a similar document issued to you by an agency of another state, regardless of whether the license or card has expired;

2. a form of identification containing your photograph that establishes your identity;
3. a birth certificate or other document confirming birth that is admissible in a court of law and establishes your identity;
4. United States citizenship papers issued to you;
5. a United States passport issued to you;
6. official mail addressed to you, by name, from a governmental entity;
7. a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows your name and address.

Q: How do I find out if I am registered to vote or if I am on the voter rolls in the county where I reside?

A: You can [check the status of your voter registration by using our search site](#), where you will select one of three methods for conducting your search. You can base your search on: 1. your Voter Unique Identifier (VUID), which appears on your voter registration certificate; 2. your Texas driver's license number, if you provided it when you applied for voter registration; or 3. your first and last name. Or, you can call the voter registrar's office in the county where you reside. To find the number, [review the list of County Voter Registration Officials](#).

Q: Can anybody vote early in person, or only those people who are going to be out of town on election day? What are the dates for voting early in person?

A: Any registered voter may vote early by personal appearance (in person). Early voting by personal appearance for the May 8, 2010 Election begins on **April 26, 2010** and ends on **May 4, 2010**. You may go to any early voting location that is convenient, as long as it is in your county of registration.

Q: Where do I go to vote?

A: You will be able to find early voting locations by using our search site [Am I Registered?](#), which will be populated with voting sites a few days before early voting begins. Or, you may want to contact the [Early Voting Clerk for State and County Elections](#) in your county. Also, many newspapers publish early voting polling locations, so you might be able to find the information there.

Q: Can anybody vote early by mail (also referred to as absentee voting)?

A: Only specific reasons entitle a registered voter to vote early by mail (no longer called absentee voting). You may request a ballot by mail if you:

1. will be away from your county on Election Day and during early voting;
2. are sick or disabled;
3. are 65 years of age or older on Election Day; or
4. are confined in jail.

Q: I fall under one of the 4 reasons above. What do I do now? Are there deadlines connected with this procedure?

A: First, request an Application for Ballot by Mail (ABBM) from the Early Voting Clerk (Voter Registrar in Hays County) in your county of registration, or from our office. Once received, read the instructions carefully, complete the ABBM form and return to the

Early Voting Clerk (Voter Registrar in Hays County) . [To learn more about the ABBM process and to request an ABBM from our office](#) (or print one directly from the web)

- Contact information for your [Early Voting Clerk for State and County Elections](#)

Q: It's election day, May 8, 2010, and I'm registered and ready to vote. Where do I go? What are the hours for voting on election day?

A:. You will be able to find your precinct voting location by using our search site [Am I Registered?](#), which will be populated with voting sites well before election day. Or, you may want to contact the elections official in your county of registration [election duties](#). Also, many newspapers publish election day polling locations, so you might be able to find the information there.

The hours of voting on **election day** are 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Q: Does a voter have to vote in the main election in order to vote in a runoff-election?

A: Section 11.001 of the Texas Election Code prescribes the specific qualifications necessary in order to vote in a Texas election. There is no specific requirement to have previously voted in the main election in order to participate in the subsequent run-off election. Therefore, such a requirement cannot be enforced. However, please note that if you participated in a main primary election for one party, you cannot participate in the runoff primary election of another party.

Provisional Voting

Provisional voting is designed to allow a voter whose name does not appear on the list of registered voters due to an administrative error to vote. The provisional voting process involves an affidavit that (1) the voter must complete stating the reasons he or she is qualified to vote; and (2) is used if the voter cannot be qualified by the methods described above. Additionally, the cast ballots are kept separately from the regular ballots and the voter's records will be reviewed later by the provisional voting ballot board (the early voting ballot board), and the ballot is counted only if the voter is determined to be a registered voter. Provisional voters will receive a notice in the mail by the 10th day after the local canvass advising them if their provisional ballots were counted, and if they were not counted, the reason why.

Military & Overseas Voters

Military and overseas voters are welcome to use the regular registration and early voting by mail process available to all voters away from their home county on Election Day. However, there are also [special provisions for military and overseas voters](#) that are also available on the Secretary of State's website.

Voters with Special Needs

Rather than providing sample questions & answers, we are directing you to [special needs information](#) on the Secretary of State's website to ensure that you are fully informed on the services available to you.

Student Voters

Student voters often seek advice regarding residency issues for voter registration purposes. [Information regarding student residency](#) issues is available on the Secretary of State's website.

Convicted Felons and Voting

In Texas, a convicted felon regains the right to vote after completing his or her sentence. Therefore, once you have completed the punishment phase (including any term of incarceration, parole, or supervision, or completed a period of probation ordered by the court), you would be [eligible to register and vote in the state of Texas](#).

Additional Information

We have information located in various sections of our website – "[Voter Information](#)," "[Candidates](#)," and "[Conducting Your Elections](#)" (for election administrators), just to name a few. You will notice that some materials are repeated in different places--our hope is to gear each section to the audience for easier bookmarking and future use.

Thank you. Should you need additional information, [please email](#) or call us at 512-312-0084.