

VOTER GUIDES

Voting:

Voting is a process by which a person or a group of people expresses an opinion formally or officially. Voting usually refers to the act of citizens choosing candidates for public office or deciding on public issues and laws. In the United States, people vote at the local, state, and federal (national) levels. Everyone should consider voting since one vote can make a huge difference.

Who Can Vote:

To vote in the United States, one must be a U.S. citizen and at least 18 years old on Election Day. States also require various periods of residency before voting is permitted. Most states have two other rules as well: A voter cannot be a felon (someone who has committed a serious crime) or mentally incompetent. In all states, voting is free. It is also voluntary; no one can be forced to vote. It is also a crime to try to stop another person from voting. Voting is private — no one can see how another person votes. And a person may vote only once in any election. Everyone should vote not because you can but because you should let your choices and opinion be heard.

How to Vote:

Before voting, people must register to vote in the precinct where they live. This consists of filling out a form with one's name, address, and other information. Registration ensures that people vote in the right place. People can usually register by mail.

Registration laws vary from state to state. In some states, citizens can register on Election Day. Typically, however, the **registration deadline is several weeks before this**. If a person fails to register in time, he or she will not be allowed to vote. Some states may require re-registration if a citizen misses a certain number of elections or changes address.

Where and When:

On Election Day, most voters go to a polling place to cast their ballots. This is usually a **public building, such as a school, recreation center, city hall, or firehouse**. Voters present themselves to the poll workers, **provide identification**, and receive the materials needed to vote.

Elections may take place at many different times. In the United States, general elections (for federal officials) are held every two years in even-numbered years. They are held on the Tuesday that falls between November 2 and 8.

Why You Should Vote:

You should vote because voting is a way to speak your mind and let your voice be heard. One voice, one vote really does count! Our children are depending on us to represent their voices too! When you vote you can make big changes to your communities. Voting can give you the credibility to make your concerns a top priority for legislators.

LINKS:

Here is the registration form:

<https://www.sec.state.ma.us/ele/elepdf/Voter-reg-mail-in.pdf>

Frequently asked Question:

<https://www.rockthevote.com/get-informed/elections/frequently-asked-questions/>

Forum:

<https://www.diglib.org/forums/2015forum/community-voting/>