

CONSTITUENTS FIRST: Safe Voting FAQs

TEXAS

The global pandemic is changing voting behavior, creating opportunities for confusion and misinformation. As a state legislator, you are uniquely positioned to help inform and keep your constituents up-to-date. We hope you find this FAQ for safe elections in Texas helpful. MAP is continuously adding resources for legislators, please contact us at policy@millennialaction.org for more information.

VOTER FAQs

- **What do I need before voting?**
 - **October 5th is the final day to register to vote for the November 3rd Election.**
To register to vote, complete this [application](#) and return it by mail or in-person to your County Voter Registration Official by close-of-business on October 5th. Find your County Official's office [here](#).

- **Can I vote in person?**
 - Early Voting: Yes, [in-person early voting](#) begins Tuesday, October 13th and ends Friday, October 30th. Dates and times may vary by location. Once you are registered to vote, you can find your polling location and hours for early voting [here](#).
 - Election Day: Yes, find your polling location [here](#).
 - **What do I need to bring with me?**
 - An eligible photo ID must be shown when voting in person. Find a list of acceptable identifications [here](#).
 - Voters who do not have an eligible identification may either sign an affidavit testifying to their identity or cast a provisional ballot.
 - **Will polls be staffed?**
 - Legitimate concerns exist around staffing polling places, and consolidating voting locations—as many states did during primaries—only adds confusion to the process and increases crowding at the polls. If you are concerned about your state's ability to staff the polls, here are some solutions that have broad support amongst the public:
 - 76% support recruiting young people to serve as poll workers
 - 71% support encouraging businesses to provide employees with paid time off on Election Day to serve as poll workers
 - 70% support giving state employees time off to serve as poll workers
 - 68% support flexibility in allowing people to serve as poll workers outside of their precinct of residence

- **Can I vote Absentee/Vote-by-mail?**
 - Voters must qualify to vote-by-mail in Texas. Please find a list of qualifications [here](#). Texas refers to absentee ballots as Absentee Ballot By Mail (ABBM) which is often used as shorthand for the process of voting by mail.

- To request an absentee ballot a voter must complete print and complete this [form](#) (or request a printed form be sent by mail [here](#)) and return this request form to your county's Early Voting Clerk. [Contact](#) your county's election administrator to confirm the appropriate Early Voting Clerk.
 - October 23rd, 2020 is the deadline to request an absentee ballot.
 - Absentee ballots must be postmarked by November 3rd, and received by November 4th to be counted in this year's election.
 - **ID and witness requirements?**
 - Absentee voters will be required to provide a photocopy of eligible identification. Your mailed ballot will include a list of eligible IDs.
 - There are no witness requirements when completing an absentee ballot if the voter is physically able to sign their ballot.
 - **How do I return my ballot?**
 - Absentee ballots must be returned by mail once early voting has begun. Please contact your [County Election administrator](#) to determine the appropriate return location.
 - **IMPORTANT:** Mailed ballots in Texas include a return envelope as well as a **secrecy envelope** to help protect the identity of voters. **All absentee voters should submit their completed ballot into the provided secrecy envelope**, and place that envelope in the provided return envelope before returning that sealed envelope by mail or in-person. This will help avoid any possible chance that your ballot is rejected.
 - Absentee voters must provide their own postage when returning completed ballots.
 - **What deadlines do I need to be aware of?**
 - October 5th: Deadline to register to vote for the November election.
 - October 23rd: Final day to request an absentee ballot by mail
 - November 3rd: All mailed ballots must be postmarked by this day
 - November 4th: All absentee ballots must be received by the appropriate [County Election administrator](#) to be counted in the General Election.
- **When will we know election results?**
 - Voters should be encouraged to exercise patience awaiting election results come November. Increased use of absentee ballots will undoubtedly slow election tallies in some places.
 - If you are highly concerned about delayed election results, and your state does not allow early early canvassing, election officials can make changes to expand the ballot processing timeframe without compromising security, as [Maryland recently did](#).
- **All information above is current as of 9/23/20.** Please see the [Texas My Vote page](#) for more information.