

REGISTRATION

AND

VOTING

**Board of Elections in the City of New York
32 Broadway, 7th Floor
New York, New York 10004**

**THIS PAMPHLET IS AVAILABLE
IN ENGLISH, SPANISH, CHINESE AND KOREAN
UPON REQUEST CALL:
(212) V-O-T-E-N-Y-C-
1-866- V-O-T-E-N-Y-C**

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CONTENTS

The Board's Role.....	3
Borough Office Addresses & Phone Numbers.....	4
Registering to Vote.....	5
Party Affiliation/Voting in Primary Elections.....	6
Keeping your Registration Current.....	7
Absentee Voting.....	8
Services for the Elderly and Handicapped.....	10
Voter's Guide to New York City Elections.....	11
The Difference between Elections/ Proposals/Referendum.....	10
Voting on Election Day.....	11
How to Vote.....	12
Frequently Asked Questions.....	12-14

BOARD'S ROLE

The Board of Elections in the City of New York is an administrative body composed of ten Commissioners, two from each borough recommended by the two major parties and then appointed by the City Council for a term of four years. The Commissioners appoint a bipartisan staff to oversee the daily activities of its Executive and five borough offices. The Board is responsible under New York State Election Law for the following:

- Processing voter registration applications
- Maintaining and update voter registration records
- Processing and verifying candidate petitions/documents
- Filing Campaign Finance Disclosures statements of candidates and campaign committees
- Recruiting, training and assigning various Poll Workers to conduct elections
- Operating poll site locations
- Ensuring each voter their right to vote at the polls or by absentee ballot
- Canvassing and certifying of the vote
- Conducting voter education outreach by distributing election information
- Preparing maps of various political subdivisions

BOROUGH OFFICE ADDRESSES AND PHONE NUMBERS

MANHATTAN BOARD OF ELECTIONS
200 Varick St., 10 Fl.
New York, New York 10014
(212) 886-2100

QUEENS BOARD OF ELECTIONS
126-06 Queens Boulevard
Kew Gardens, Queens
(718) 730-6730

BRONX BOARD OF ELECTIONS
1780 Grand Concourse
Bronx, New York 10457
(718) 299-9017

STATEN ISLAND BOARD OF ELECTIONS
1 Edgewater Plaza, 4th Fl.
Staten Island, New York 10305
(718) 876-0079

BROOKLYN BOARD OF ELECTIONS
345 Adams Street, 4th Fl.
Brooklyn, New York 11201
(718) 797-8800

PHONE BANK
1-212-VOTE-NYC (868-3692)
1-866-VOTE-NYC
TDD 212-487-5496

NEW YORK CITY BOARD OF ELECTIONS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE
42 Broadway 7th floor
New York, New York 10004
(212) 487-5300

The Phone Bank is linked to a caller distribution system which enables Board personnel to handle up to 70 calls at a time. The Phone Bank is open five days a week from 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Callers can obtain information regarding the following during business hours: poll site, voter status, registration deadlines, voting machine instructions. They may also request applications for: voter registration, an absentee ballot and to become a Poll Worker. The hours are expanded from 6:00 A.M. to 9:00 P.M. during peak election periods. The Phone Bank has an “IVR (Integrated Voice Response)” system that allows us to give 24 hour service to the public. The system features multi-language recordings in English, Spanish, Chinese and Korean. After 5:00 P.M. the “automated operator” records names and addresses of callers requesting applications.

INTERNET

The Board of Elections now has a website provides: Election Dates; information on how to obtain a voter registration application, a printable voter registration application; that can be filled out and mailed to the Board of Elections; the locations and telephone numbers of the offices of the Boards of Elections in the 5 Boroughs; District Maps; transportation maps regarding poll sites for Election Day; etc. Our WEB SITE the address is <http://vote.nyc.ny.us>

REGISTERING TO VOTE

Qualifications

To register to vote in the City of New York, you must:

1. Be a citizen of the United States (Includes those persons born in Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands).
2. Be a New York City resident for at least 30 days.
3. Be 18 years of age on the date of the next election.
4. Not be serving a jail sentence or be on parole for a felony conviction.
5. Not be adjudged mentally incompetent by a court.
6. Not claim the right to vote elsewhere (outside the City of New York).

Although you can register any time during the year, your application must be delivered or postmarked **at least 25 days before the next election** for it to be effective for the election.

How To Register

To register to vote, you must fill out in blue or black ink a voter registration application and send it to the Board of Elections or personally deliver it to one of our offices. The registration application must have the original signature on it. It cannot be photocopied or faxed.

It is to be noted that in 2002, the United States Government enacted into law the “Help America Vote Act”,(HAVA) which requires that any first time voter registering by mail as of January 1, 2003 must provide some additional identification. The law requires that the voter provides his/her Driver’s License ID number or last four digits of his/her Social Security Number.

We have redesigned the Voter Registration Application to accommodate this identification information

If, however, these forms of identification are not provided when a person registers to vote by MAIL, the Board will send a letter to the FIRST TIME VOTER asking the voter to provide forms of required identification information.

If you would like an application mailed to you, call the Board at 212-VOTE-NYC (868-3692) or 1-866-VOTE-NYC. Applications are also available at all motor vehicle offices, public libraries, post offices and many other government agencies.

Voter registration in New York City is permanent. However, to assure that your registration remains valid you must notify the Board of Elections of your new address whenever you move, or if you change your name.

PARTY AFFILIATION

Party Affiliation in New York State:

The voter registration application contains a section where you can indicate your choice for party affiliation. If you would like to register without designating a party, simply mark the space indicating “I do not wish to enroll in a party.”

The new registration application list the Parties with ballot status, which as of 2003 are:

- Republican
- Democratic
- Independence
- Conservative
- Working Families

Any other group may be written in under OTHER(write in) and we will enter up to the first 15 characters of that name into the registration system.

Generally a person who chooses “OTHER” or “I DO NOT WISH TO ENROLL IN A PARTY” cannot vote in a primary election.

Party Affiliation and the Primary System

In most party primary elections, **only** voters enrolled in one of the parties qualified to hold a primary in New York City may vote to nominate their party’s candidate to run in the general election.

Candidates nominated by the parties for each office then appear on the general election ballot, along with any independent candidates who gain access to the general election ballot without running in a party primary.

Voting in Party Primary Elections

Because a primary is strictly a party election, only voters enrolled in one of the parties conducting a primary may participate in that party’s election, unless a party’s rules otherwise provides. All registered voters vote in General and Special Elections.

To Change Your Party Affiliation

You can change your party affiliation by indicating the change on the voter registration application and sending it to the Board. We will process the change and send you a new voter card reflecting the change in party. You cannot CHANGE your enrollment and vote in the NEW PARTY of your choice in the same year. A change of enrollment does

not become until effective one week AFTER the next November general election. The last day to change your enrollment is the same as the last day to register for the general election.

KEEPING YOUR REGISTRATION CURRENT

What the Law Says

Your residence address determines the particular contests in which you are eligible to vote. Because of the role that address plays in the electoral system, **New York State law requires voters to notify the Board of Elections within 25 days of an address change to preserve their voting rights.**

To Make Changes to Your Registration

You must notify the Board, in writing, to make any change to your registration (change of address or name). You may make the change on a voter registration application and send the completed voter registration application to the Board of Elections.

Controls for Keeping the Registry Current

The Board has developed two programs to keep the registry current:

1. In conjunction with NCOA (National Change of Address)/System, the Board of Elections matches its list of registered voters to a United States Postal Service list of people who have moved. This is run every month by the Board of Elections. This system is generated by the United States Postal Service and will indicate to the Board those registered voters who have moved within the state or out of the state. To those voters, the Board will send a Confirmation Notice to verify that the voter has moved.

In August of every year, an Information Notice is mailed to every registered voter in New York City giving him/her the dates of the upcoming elections, their ED/AD, poll site, election hours, etc. Those persons whose notice is returned to the Board as undeliverable, are then sent a Confirmation Notice so they can verify

- a) that they have moved ; or
- b) sign an affidavit stating that they did NOT move.

If they have moved within the NYC area, they must notify the Board of Elections with a change of address card. They can fill out a voter registration application and indicate that this is a change of address.

2. Monthly reports received from various city/state agencies (Mental Health, Office of Court Administration, Health Department, Motor Vehicles, etc.) and are used to keep the voter registry current.

ABSENTEE VOTING

Registered voters who cannot make it to their poll site on Election Day because they will be outside the City of New York on Election Day or are in prison (not convicted of a felony), ill, disabled or in and hospital or long-term care facility may vote by absentee ballot.

There are two options for New York City voters wishing to cast absentee ballots:

1. Voting in person at your Board's Borough office
2. Casting an absentee ballot by mail

In-Person Absentee Voting

Absentee voting in person begins as soon as the absentee ballots have certified and are sent to the Borough Office. Absentee voting in person ends the day before Election Day.

In person absentee voting is conducted during the above period, at the Board of Elections' Borough Offices. The hours are 9:00A.M. to 5.00 P.M. Monday through Friday and on the weekend prior to Election Day.

By-Mail Absentee Voting

Requests for mail absentee ballots must be in writing and must reach the Board's office no later than the seventh day before an election.

mail absentee ballot request must include the following information:

- Name
- Address on voter registration application
- Mailing address (if different)
- Reason for requesting absentee ballot application
- Signature

To be counted, the voted absentee ballot (and completed application form) must be postmarked by the day before Election Day and must reach the Board of Elections no later than seven (7) days after the election.

Emergency Absentee Ballots

If the deadline for requesting an absentee ballot by mail has passed and you cannot appear at your poll site on Election Day because of an accident or sudden illness, then you may send a representative with a written letter of authorization to receive an Absentee Ballot on your behalf. A completed application and a voter's completed ballot must be returned to the Board Office by 9:00P.M. on Election Day.

SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY AND HANDICAPPED

Making the Polls Accessible

The Board has made a concerted effort to increase the accessibility of poll sites for senior citizens and handicapped voters by removing physical barriers at most New York City poll sites.

The effort includes:

- Installation of curb cuts to assist voters with wheelchairs in gaining access from street level
- Construction of building ramps or installing temporary ramps for voters with canes or wheelchairs
- Miscellaneous repairs to doors, handrails, light fixtures, and walkways

In some cases, poll sites have been relocated to more accessible buildings. However, problems remain at some sites, and elderly or handicapped voters who feel that their poll site is inaccessible may call the Voter Registration Unit of their local Borough office for information on voting at an alternative poll site by special ballot.

TDD Service

A Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) has been installed in the Phone Bank to answer inquiries of any voter with a hearing impairment who has access to a TDD. The TDD Service Number is 212-487-5496.

Permanent Absentee Ballot

Any voter who is homebound or a resident of a long-term care facility can apply in writing to receive an absentee ballot permanently at a designated address. A ballot will automatically be mailed for each election to the voter. The ballot should be postmarked by the day before the election and must reach the Board of Elections no later than seven (7) days after the election.

VOTERS' GUIDE TO NEW YORK CITY ELECTIONS

The Elections For The Following Public Office May Appear on New York City Ballots

- President and Vice President of the United States
- United States Senator
- Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
- Governor and Lieutenant Governor of New York State
- State Attorney General
- State Comptroller
- N.Y. State Senator
- N.Y. State Assembly Member
- Mayor of New York City
- N.Y.C. Public Advocate
- N.Y.C. City Comptroller
- Borough President
- City Council Member
- District Attorney
- Surrogate Judge
- State Supreme Court Justice
- Civil Court Judge

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ELECTIONS/PROPOSALS/REFERENDUM

Election Schedule

Primaries for partisan offices are held in September, with General Elections in November. In Presidential election years, a Presidential Primary Election is held in March.

Primary and General Election

A **Primary Election** is held to permit enrolled voters in a qualified political party to select their party's nominees to the general election for public offices and actually elect party officers. Because a primary is a party election usually voters registered in one of the parties qualified to conduct a primary in New York City may vote in their party's primary, unless otherwise permitted by a party's rule .

A **General Election** is held to elect candidates to public offices. Nominees selected in the party primary elections appear on the ballot, along with independent candidates.

Proposals and Referendum Measures

The State Legislature, the Mayor and/or City Council can place Proposals, Questions and Referendum measures on the ballot for New York city voters to adopt a change in the State Constitution, change a law or approve the expenditure of funds without legislative actions. In addition, a Measure can be placed on the ballot if it meets certain legal requirements and if proponents show public support by collecting signatures of at least (5%) percent of the city's registered voters.

Ballot Questions

Ballot Questions may appear on a General Election ballot pursuant to applicable provisions of the State Constitution, the City Charter and State Law.

VOTING ON ELECTION DAY

Step 1 – “Where to Vote”

Make sure you are at the correct poll site and Election District (E.D.) for your address. If you are not sure of that location you should call the Board's phone bank at (212) V-O-T-E-N-Y-C or (866) V-O-T-E-N-Y-C.

Step 2 – “Be an Informed Voter”

Remember to look at the sample ballot and voting machine instructions on the wall before you get on line.

Step 3 – “Signing-In”

To vote, you must go to your assigned Election District poll site which is indicated on your voter registration card or the Annual Information Notice or ask any election official at the polling site to look up your address in the street locator to insure that you are at the right poll site and election district. After you sign your name on the computer listing (poll list) of registered voters, a poll worker will issue you a voter card and direct you to a voting machine.

Step 4 – “If You Need Assistance”

You may be assisted in the voting machine by any person of your choice including a bipartisan team of trained poll workers, except your employer or union representative. At selected sites, Board interpreters are also available to assist voters.

HOW TO VOTE

- a) To vote, part the voting machine curtain and enter.
- b) Pull the large red handle from left to right. Do not touch this large handle again until you've made all your selections.
- c) Make your selections by turning and leaving the levers down. An "X" will appear. If you make a mistake, move the lever back and select the candidate you want.
- d) In some elections, you may vote for a candidate not listed on the ballot by writing-in the candidate's name. Locate the button over the column of numbered slots on the left of the voting machine; depress the button, and while holding it in, open the slot designated on the ballot machine; depress the button, and while holding it in, open the slot ; write the name of the preferred candidate in the slot; cast the vote for other offices in the usual manner
- e) When you finish selecting, leave the levers down and pull the large red handle all the way to the left. The levers will return to their original position, the write in slot will close and your vote will be counted.
- f) Part the curtains and exit.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

VOTERGUIDE

A "Voters" Guide for both the Primary and General Election in municipal election years **only**, is produced by the NYC Campaign Finance Board. The guide will be sent to every household in New York City with a registered voter. They will be mailed toward the end of August for the primary election and in the middle of October for the general election. If you do not receive one, call the New York City Campaign Finance Board at 212-306-7100. Also, look for candidate forums and debates within your community, along with profiles in the newsmedia for other federal and state contests.

DO I HAVE TO REGISER EVERY YEAR?

No. However, if you move or change your name you must notify the Board of Elections. Every year Information Notices are sent to the addresses of registered voters. If that notice comes back undeliverable, the Board of Elections will send out a Confirmation Notice.

If that comes back undeliverable then the voter is moved into inactive status. If the voter does not vote in one election before the next two consecutive federal elections (4

years), in the fifth year the voter's registration is cancelled. In order for the voter to vote again after he/she has been cancelled, he/she must re-register. It is to be noted that if a voter is in an Inactive Status but votes within the four year time frame the registration is made active again.

HOW WILL I KNOW WHERE TO VOTE?

You should receive a notice from the Board of Elections, telling you where to vote. Watch for it. It will also indicate your Election District and Assembly District as well as your poll site. If for some reason you do not receive this notice, then you should call the Phone Bank at the New York City Board of Elections at 212-V-O-T-E-N-Y-C or 866-V-O-T-E-N-Y-C.

IF I AM A STUDENT IN NEW YORK CITY AND HAVE A RESIDENCE IN ANOTHER STATE, HOW CAN I VOTE IN AN ELECTION?

If you are a student in New York City, but have a residence in another state and wish to register in New York, you must fill out a registration form indicating your New York residency. That registration will be treated as any other registration. The new registration will cancel out the registration in the other state.

IF I WAS A CONVICTED FELON, AND SERVED MY TIME MAY I REGISTER TO VOTE.

If you were a felon and it was indicated in Board of Election's system, but you have completed your maximum term of your sentence, you may re-register. A new registration application filed by a past felon will be treated and processed as any other registration application.

WHAT DO I NEED WHEN I GO TO VOTE? HAVA ID REQUIREMENTS

The "Help America Vote Act" (HAVA) which was enacted into law in 2002, requires all first time voters, who register by mail on or after January 1, 2003, to provide additional identification either on or with the voter registration application, i.e., the driver's license number or the last four digits of your social security number. If you do not provide your drivers license number or the last four digits of your social security number at the time you submit your registration form by mail, you can include a copy of any of the following documentation with your registration application : Non-Driver ID Number; Current and Valid Photo ID; Current Utility Bill; Bank Statement; Government Check or Paycheck; Government Document that shows Name and Address.

If the voter has not provided any of the acceptable forms of identification by the time they vote in a Federal Election, the voter will not be allowed to vote by machine, but will be able to vote by affidavit ballot. The voter will not be denied the right to vote.

WHAT CAN I DO IF I'M NOT PERMITTED TO VOTE

If you are not on the poll list, it may be because your registration form:

- was not received on time for the election
- you are not enrolled in the party which is having the Primary

If you believe that you are eligible, you can still vote. Ask to vote using an affidavit ballot.

After the election, the Board of Elections will check its records and your vote will be counted if you are indeed eligible to vote. If not, you will receive a notice with the reasons why you were not eligible along with a registration application for future elections.

IF I REGISTER TO VOTE WILL I BE CALLED TO JURY DUTY?

Jurors are drawn from lists of state taxpayers, licensed drivers, telephone listings, magazine subscriptions, etc., as well as from voter registration rolls. Do not give up your right to vote thinking you will avoid jury duty. Chances are, if you pay taxes or drive a car you will be called. Besides, serving on a jury is a privilege, one that permits you to personally stand up for all Americans' right to a trial by a jury of their peers.

