

Why Your Vote Matters

Millennials and Gen Z became the largest share of eligible voters in 2020, but because of their lower voting rates, they have not been the largest share of the electorate in previous elections. **In other words, your voice and your vote can affect change.** Local, state, and national elected officials make decisions that impact your daily life, like student debt, funding for higher education, transportation, and healthcare.

Frequently Asked Questions

Didn't find the answer to your question? Here are some [other common questions](#) from our friends at NYPIRG.

- **If I'm from another area of New York, where should I register to vote?**
College students have a choice about where to register to vote. You can register using your campus or off-campus apartment address or using your permanent home address. If you register or remain registered at your home address you may want to determine how to vote using an absentee ballot for the primary and general elections. New York State has guidance on [how to request and utilize an absentee ballot](#) if you will not be able to make it home on election day. You may only be registered and vote in one location.
- **What's the deadline to register?** In 2024 you must adhere to the following deadlines:
 - Presidential Primary Registration Deadline: NA this year
 - State Primary Election Registration Deadline: June 25, 2024
 - General Election Registration Deadline: October 26, 2024
- **When are the 2024 Elections?**
 - Presidential Primary Election: NA this year
 - State Primary Election: June 25, 2024
 - General Election: November 5, 2024
- **What's the difference between the General Election and "Primary" elections?** *General Elections* are held yearly in November and are when most candidates running for local, state, and national offices are elected. This is when the President, most Senate and House of Representative members, most state-level congress representatives, and local city/town/village positions are elected. A *primary election* is an election used either to narrow the field of candidates for a given elective office or to determine the nominees for political parties in advance of the general election. New York State has [closed primaries](#), so in order to participate a voter must affiliate formally, or register, with a political party in advance of the election date in order to participate in that party's primary election. For example, to determine which Republican candidate will advance to be the party's nominee for a Senate position, you must be registered as a

Republican. If you are a registered Democrat, Independent, Green Party, etc. you cannot vote in the Republican primary election.

- **How can I make changes to my name and/or address to my voter registration records?** The voter registration form should be used as a change of address form. Notices of change of address from registered voters received at least 20 days before a special, primary or general election by a [county board of elections](#) must be processed and entered in the records in time for that election.
- **How can I change my party affiliation to vote in a primary election?** The voter registration form should be used to change your party affiliation from one party to another or to affiliate for the first time in a party. A change of affiliation received up until February 14 each year will be effective immediately. Changes received on or after February 15 until seven days after the June Primary Election will be set aside and opened the seventh day following the June Primary Election and entered in the voter's registration record. Please see [Deadlines](#) referenced.
- **Do I need any identification in order to vote on Election Day?** Probably not, but you may want to bring ID to be safe. Only certain newly registered voters are required bring an ID to the polls, so if you've voted in your county/NYC in a previous election you shouldn't need one. Most voters who have voted in a previous election will not have to show any identification or proof of citizenship to vote. The mailing or voter card you may have received in the mail is intended to help you locate your polling site, but it is not required to vote. As a voter all you will have to do is sign your name in the poll site book. However, voters registering for the first time in their present county/NYC, may be asked to show ID at the polls in order to submit their ballot into a scanner, if they did not include their license (or non-driver ID) number or the last four digits of their social security number on their registration form, or if their license/ID number/social security number couldn't be verified with the state's database. So new voters should make sure they bring ID with them to the polls and as a precaution, already registered voters may want to do the same. All that said, even if you are asked to produce ID and that ID is rejected by poll workers it is still your right to vote by paper/affidavit ballot. If you are asked to show ID, all that is required is a "current and valid photo identification" with your name and picture such as a driver's license or college ID. Government documents and utility bills or bank statements with your name and address are also acceptable forms of ID.
- **Where do I go to vote?** If you live on campus, your polling site is the Asarese-Matters Community Center at 50 Rees Street (across from campus parking lot R-14). If you are registered to vote in a New York City borough, call toll free (866) VOTE-NYC or visit the Board of Elections in the City of New York's [website](#).
 - [Erie County Board of Elections](#)
 - [Niagara County Board of Elections](#)

- **Do I have any rights as a voter?** Yes! NYPIRG compiled a great list of [New York State Voter's Bill of Rights](#). It tells you what to do in scenarios if you think your rights have been violated. Some important things to keep in mind:
 - You are entitled to vote as long as you are in line by 9:00 pm;
 - You may take any information into the polls with you. But you can't solicit votes for a candidate or issue on the ballot, or electioneer, within 100 feet of the poll site entrance.
 - Most polling places are accessible to people with disabilities. If yours is not, you may ask to have your records transferred to a nearby accessible polling place. (You may also vote by absentee ballot. Try to request an absentee ballot at least a month before Election Day.)
 - Your right to vote may be "challenged" by someone at the polls. You'll have to sign an oath (affidavit) swearing you're eligible, but you still get to vote.
 - All poll workers are required to wear an ID badge with their name

- **I am a victim of domestic violence. How can I ensure I protect myself?** N.Y. Election Law (5-508) allows victims of domestic violence who obtain a court order from NY Supreme Court, Family Court or County Court in the county where they are registered to have their voter registration record kept separate and apart from other registration records and not be made available for inspection or copying by the public or any other person, except election officials acting within the course and scope of their official duties. Under a separate section of the law (11-306), you can also be excused from going to your polling place to vote and get a special ballot. For further information, you should [contact your local board of elections](#) for their confidential registration and special ballot procedures.

If you want to vote in an election, you must be registered to vote. Please note that the following information is only for domestic (not international) students.

How to Register to Vote in New York State

To register to vote in New York State, you must:

- be a United States citizen;
- be 16 years old (note: you must be 18 years old by the date of the general, primary or other election in which you want to vote);
- be a resident of the state and county, city or village for at least 30 days before the election;
- not be in prison or on parole for a felony conviction (unless parolee pardoned or restored rights of citizenship);
- not be adjudged mentally incompetent by a court;
- not claim the right to vote elsewhere

In Person

You can register in person at your [county board of elections](#) or at any New York State [Agency-Based voter registration center](#). You may also submit your voter application form at the Department of Motor Vehicles, either in person or on their web site. For step-by-step assistance in filling out your voter registration form, use [this guide](#).

By Mail

- Request a New York State Voter Registration form by mail by entering your name directly on the [Voter Registration Form Request](#).
- Call 1-800-FOR-VOTE (1-800-367-8683) to request an application

For step-by-step assistance in filling out your voter registration form, use [this guide](#)

Online

You can use the [DMV Electronic Voter Registration Application](#) to register to vote or to update the information you have on file with the New York State Board of Elections. Completed applications are forwarded to the appropriate County or City Board of Elections for approval and processing. For step-by-step assistance in filling out your voter registration form, use [this guide](#).

To register you will need:

- A current New York State DMV-issued driver's license, permit, or Non-Driver ID, **or...**
- the last 4 digits of your Social Security Number (SSN)
- the ZIP Code currently on record with the DMV

Cast Your Vote

Early In-Person Voting

In January 2019, New York State began modernizing the election law, expanding voter access by enacting a flexible in-person ["Early Voting"](#) period. All primary, run-off primary, special, and general elections now allow New Yorkers to have more convenient opportunities to participate in elections. Learn where and when you can go to cast your vote ahead of election day, based on the county where you are registered to vote at:

<https://www.voteearlyny.org/>

Keep in mind:

- Any registered voter is eligible to vote early in-person during the early voting period.
- Early voting in New York is available at designated early voting sites from 10 days before the election through the 2nd day before the election.
- 2024 Early Voting Period:
 - Presidential Primary Election: NA this year
 - State Primary Election: June 15 – 23, 2024
 - General Election: October 26 – November 3, 2024

Election Day Voting

Voting sites will be open from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Election Day. If you are in line by the closing time, then you must be allowed to vote. Hours may vary for primary elections so check with your [board of elections](#) before voting in a primary.

2024 Election Days:

- Presidential Primary Election: NA this year
- State Primary Election: June 25, 2024
- General Election: November 5, 2024

Learn about the Candidates and the Issues

<https://www.campusvoteproject.org/stateguides/New-York>