

A Guide to Voter Registration and Absentee Voting



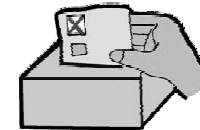
If you are a citizen of the United States, you have a responsibility to participate in the political process by voting. As Christians, we have a responsibility to ensure that we elect persons of character who will work to ensure: 1) fair representation for all; and 2) passage of just and fair legislation, with sufficient resources to provide for implementation and enforcement. To carry out your responsibility, you must be registered. To register in Pennsylvania, you must: 1) be 18 years old by election day; 2) be a U.S. citizen for at least one year prior to the election; and 3) have lived in your election district for at least 30 days before the election.

Registering to vote is simple and convenient. You may obtain a registration form from your county voter service office, on the Internet, or through political parties or the League of Women Voters (see back). You will need to update your registration if you have moved, changed your party affiliation, or changed your name.

Once registered, circumstances may arise that affect your ability to vote during the scheduled time or at the place where you are registered. These circumstances need not present barriers that prevent you from voting. Some information you should know:

- **Absentee Ballot** - When you know in advance that you will be unable to vote on Election Day, you should vote by **absentee ballot**. You must apply for an absentee ballot at least seven days before an election. Absentee ballots are due by 5 pm on the Friday before the election.
- **Provisional Ballot** - If you appear to vote and are told that your name is not on the register, if you do not have proper identification (for first time voters-see back), or if an election official claims that you are ineligible to vote, you may request to vote by **provisional ballot**. The county board of elections will have three days to determine the validity of your ballot. You may contact 1-800-VOTES-PA and provide your Provisional Ballot ID number to learn if your ballot was counted, partially counted, or why it was not counted. More information is available on the "HAVA" section of the Pennsylvania Department of State website (see back).
- **Alternative Ballot** - If you are disabled and unable to vote because your polling place is not accessible, you may request an **alternative ballot**. Because this ballot must be requested prior to Election Day, you should call your county board of elections in advance to determine accessibility, and, if necessary, you can request an alternative ballot at that time. Alternative ballots are due by the close of the polls on Election Day (generally 8:00 pm).

Resources for Voter Registration



From the Internet

1. Contact the Pennsylvania Department of State:
<http://www.dos.state.pa.us>
Click on "Commissions, Elections, and Legislation," then "PA Votes! - Voting in PA," then "Voter Registration Application" to download voter registration forms from this site
Click on "Commissions, Elections, and Legislation," then "Elections," then "County Boards of Election" for County Voter Services Offices listings for Absentee Ballots
From "Elections," click on "Pennsylvania Elections Important Dates to Remember" for deadlines and election dates
2. Denominational Resources
Example: UCC.org/justice--Click on "Our Faith Our Vote," then "Get Started," then "Organizer's Kit" to find "Faith, Politics and Elections," a 27 page document filled with useful information
3. Political Party Resources
4. League of Women Voters
Toll free: 1-800-692-7281; Web Site: <http://pa.lwv.org>
Gives very detailed information about dates, special circumstances. Also offers a Voters Guide a month before elections
5. National Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice (www.nicwj.org) - Click on "Faithful Citizenship"
6. Sojourners and Working Assets (www.yourvotematters.org/sojo)
7. Federal Election Commission (www.fec.gov/votregis/pdf/nvra.pdf)
To link directly to any of these sites, go to www.pachurches.org and click on "Public Advocacy."

Note: New Requirement

Pennsylvania law requires that registered voters who appear to vote for the first time in an election district after December 9, 2003, must present identification. Appropriate forms of identification include:

- Photo IDs: PA driver's license or ID card issued by PennDOT; ID issued by any other Commonwealth agency; ID issued by the U.S. Government; U.S. Passport; U.S. Armed Forces ID; student ID; employee ID.
- Non-Photo IDs: Voters identification card issued by the voter registration commission; non-photo ID issued by the Commonwealth; non-photo ID issued by the U.S. Government; firearm permit; current utility bill, bank statement, or paycheck; government check.

Important election dates in 2004

October 4 Last day to register before the election
November 2 General election day; polls open 7 am—8 pm



*This important information provided by
the Pennsylvania Council of Churches
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