



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF GREATER PITTSBURGH, INC

Election Q & A

These are the most frequently asked questions about elections in Allegheny County (and the answers). If you have other questions not answered here, call our Community Information Center at 412-261-4281 or email at info@pgh.lwv.org.

Can I still register to vote?

Registration closes 30 days before an election

I will be 18 after registration closes, but before the election. May I register?

Yes, if your birthday is the day of the election or before. "A voter becomes of age on the day before his eighteenth birthday." (county Digest of Election Laws.)

Am I still registered to vote? I can't remember when I last voted?

If you registered in or after June, 1993, you cannot be disqualified from voting in elections because you have not voted. However, if you registered before that and did not vote for 5 years, you may have been removed from the state registration list and you cannot vote until you re-register. Call the [Division of Elections](#) to find out your status. You should be able to [confirm your registration here](#).

I moved after registration closed. Can I vote?

If you have moved from the residence where you are registered to vote to another residence in Pennsylvania less than 30 days before an election, you may vote only at your former residence. After the election, but at least 30 days before the next election, you should change your voter registration by submitting a new voter registration mail application form.

If you have moved from the residence where you are registered to vote more than 30 days before an election but did not change your address with the voter registration officials, you may vote only at the polling place that covers your

old residence, the one where you are registered to vote. However, you can vote at your old polling place only once, and there are special procedures that you must follow.

If you are challenged you may vote a provisional ballot. You can appear at the Court of Common Pleas downtown at the Court House and plead your case. You may call the Court on Election Day, 412-350-5463.

Where can I get a mail registration form?

The forms should be available in Driver's License Centers, State Liquor Stores, Welfare Centers, Libraries, League of Women Voters [Community Information Center](#), and at the [Division of Elections](#). Some municipal buildings, banks, grocery stores, and post offices also have the forms or [download it here](#).

I changed my name? Can I vote?

Yes, you may vote under your old name as long as you wish. However, we recommend reregistering by filing a new form.

How do I get an absentee ballot?

Call the [Division of Elections](#), 412-350-4520, for Absentee Ballot Application Form or [download it here](#). See [Pennsylvania Election Calendar](#) for deadline dates to apply for and submit an absentee ballot.

It's 2 days before the election. I am going out of town unexpectedly, or I am sick, or a member of my family is going to the hospital. Can I vote?

State law requires that absentee ballots be in the [Division of Elections](#) Office at 5 p.m. the Friday before the election. In an emergency after that time you may download an emergency absentee ballot, which must be notarized before it is submitted. The procedure is complex. Look [here](#), then under Voting and Elections -> Types of Voting -> Absentee Ballot, and scroll to nearly the bottom of the page.

I am registered as an independent. Can I vote in a primary election?

On ballot questions only. Pennsylvania is a closed Primary state - party members, only, may nominate candidates for the General Election. BUT you CAN vote on all ballot questions - amendments to the state constitution, bond issues and special elections.

Can I change my party by mail? Yes, you may change your party by mail by using the mail registration form.

What identification do I need at the polls? If you are voting at your polling place for the first time, you must bring a Photo ID such as a driver's license, student ID or some other form of US or PA government issued ID or a US or PA government issued non-photo ID such as a voter identification card, a firearm permit, or a current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, or government check. [Details here.](#)

Otherwise a photo ID is not required to vote.

What do I do if my right to vote is challenged at the polls?

See the Judge of Elections: If your right to vote is challenged at the polls on election day, you are in the right polling place, and the problem cannot be resolved by the judge of elections, you have the right to ask for and vote by provisional ballot. If it is later determined that you were eligible to vote your ballot will be counted. You will be given instructions on how to determine if your vote was counted.

Where is my polling place?

You can also call our [Community Information Center](#) and we will attempt to determine your polling place from street lists.

Do I need my Voting Registration Card to vote?

No, you do not need the card to vote.

What ward and district am I in?

Call our [Community Information Center](#) at 412-261-4284 and we will attempt to determine that for you from our street lists.

My son/daughter is in the service. How can he/she vote?

You can write to the [Division of Elections](#), and request a military ballot. They do not have to be registered, but must be 18 by the day after the election. You may pick up a request for a military ballot for the service person and fill it out. Spouses of military personnel must be registered in Pennsylvania.

I am blind. Can the League of Women Voters help me with information on the candidates and ballot questions?

You can call the [Community Information Center](#) and we can read the Voters Guide to you over the phone.

How may I get voting assistance at the polls?

You may have assistance if it is so noted on your registration card. Call the Division of Elections, 412-350-4500. Anyone can help except the voter's employer, an agent of the employer, an officer or agent of the voter's union, and the judge of elections. However, if the disability is not recorded on the elector's registration card, the elector may receive assistance if the elector completes a declaration in the polling place. (This is a change from prior election policy.)

How do I use a voting machine?

See the demo [here](#).

How long do I have in the voting booth?

You have three minutes (state law) but you may take longer IF it is not crowded. Study the sample ballot, which must be posted at each polling place.

Will there be a sample ballot in the newspapers?

No: there must be one posted in each polling place. (In Allegheny County alone there are 69 varieties. The cost is too high for duplication in the newspapers.)

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