

Frequently Asked Questions

General

Do I have to show my voter registration card in order to vote?

- *No. As long as you are in the correct polling location, your name will appear on the registration list supplied to your precinct.*

Do I need to show identification in order to vote?

- *Michigan does have a voter identification requirement at the polls. Voters are asked to present an acceptable photo ID such as a Michigan driver's license or identification card. Please note that voters who do not have an acceptable form of ID or failed to bring it with them to the polls still can vote. They simply sign a brief affidavit stating that they're not in possession of a photo ID. Their ballots are included with all others and counted on Election Day.*
- The following types of photo ID are acceptable:
 - Michigan driver's license or state-issued ID card
 - Driver's license or personal identification card issued by another state
 - Federal or state government-issued photo identification
 - U.S. passport
 - Military ID with photo
 - Student identification with photo from a high school or accredited institution of higher learning
 - Tribal identification card with photo
 - The ID does not need your address.

Can Michigan residents in jail or prison still vote?

- *Michigan residents confined in jail or prison who are awaiting arraignment or trial are eligible to vote. However, residents who are serving a sentence in jail or prison after conviction cannot vote during the period of confinement. When residents are released from jail or prison after serving a sentence, they are free to participate in elections without restriction.*

Must I vote the entire ballot?

- *You are not required to vote the entire ballot. You may pick and choose the races or ballot questions for which you want to vote. Skipping sections of the ballot does not invalidate your ballot.*

Can I vote a "split" ticket?

- *August Primary*
 - *You cannot "split" your ticket (i.e., vote in more than one party column) when voting in the August primary. Voters participating in an August primary must confine their votes to a single party column.*
- *November General Election*
 - *You can "split" your ticket when voting in the November general election. A voter participating in a November general election who wishes to cast a "split" ticket can vote for individual candidates of his or her choice under any party.*

Absentee Voting

Are absentee ballots always counted?

- *Yes. Absent voter ballots simply allow voters who are eligible to cast ballots prior to Election Day. They are counted on Election Day along with all ballots voted at the polls.*

What hours are the polls open on Election Day?

- *The polls are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. for all elections.*

How do I get an absent voter ballot?

- *Your request for an absent voter ballot must be in writing and can be submitted to your city or township clerk. (For assistance in obtaining the address of your city or township clerk, see Michigan.gov/Vote) You must request an absent voter ballot by mailing the application, large print application, a letter, a postcard, or a pre-printed application form obtained from your local clerk's office. Requests to have an absent voter ballot mailed to you must be received by your clerk no later than 5 p.m. the Friday before the election.*
- *Once your request is received by the local clerk, your signature on the request will be checked against your voter registration record before a ballot is issued. You must be a registered voter to receive an absent voter ballot. Requests for absent voter ballots are processed immediately. Absent voter ballots may be issued to you at your home address or any address outside of your city or township of residence.*

How can I check on the status of my absent voter ballot request?

- *You can check on the status of your absent voter ballot request online by using the Michigan Voter Information Center.*

Where do I send the absent voter ballot once I've filled it out?

- *Please return it to your local clerk's office. The Michigan Voter Information Center will help you locate the office if the address is not provided on the return envelope.*

When is the absent voter ballot due?

- *After receiving your absent voter ballot, you have until 8 p.m. on Election Day to complete the ballot and return it to the clerk's office. Your ballot will not be counted unless your signature is on the return envelope and matches your signature on file. If you received assistance voting the ballot, then the signature of the person who helped you must also be on the return envelope. Only you, a family member or person residing in your household, a mail carrier, or election official is authorized to deliver your signed absent voter ballot to your clerk's office.*

General Facts

How can I learn more about the presidential primary process?

- *Primary elections are used by political parties to choose which candidate will represent their party in the General election in November.*
- *In simplest terms the State of Michigan has an "open" presidential primary, which means that voters are not required to be a part of a political party to vote in the primary elections. There are generally 2 primary elections in a presidential or goverternial election year. The presidential and goverternial elections are generally respectively in March and September. The primary process for Senators, Congressman, and State Representatives.*
 - *Voters are only allowed to vote for one party in primary elections and **CAN'T** vote split in these elections, unless their ballot will not be counted.*
- *For more information the Bureau of Elections has compiled [The Presidential Primary Reference Guide](#) which lists the history of the presidential primary in Michigan.*

How does the Electoral College work in simple terms?

- *The Electoral College was created by the framers of the U.S. Constitution as an alternative to electing the president by popular vote or by Congress. Each state elects*

the number of representatives to the Electoral College that is equal to its number of Senators—two from each state—plus its number of delegates in the House of Representatives. The District of Columbia, which has no voting representation in Congress, has three Electoral College votes. There are currently 538 electors in the Electoral College; 270 votes are needed to win the presidential election.

- *Many legal scholars, reporters, and influential people believe that the electoral college has a large flaw due to its focus on “battleground states” and not the entire as a whole. There have been some policy changes amongst the states to ignore the electoral college by declaring their electoral votes to whichever candidate wins the national vote, but as of the writing of this piece there are only 118 electoral votes that have pledged to use this concept.*

Who are my Candidates

How can I learn about the candidates and proposals in my area?

- *The [Michigan Voter Information Center](#) can help you determine what you will see on your ballot on Election Day. You may also contact your local clerk's office to learn more. The Michigan Voter Information Center can help you locate your local clerk's office.*